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THE CAMBRIDGE BOOK
OF PROSE AND VERSE

*FROM THE BEGINNINGS TO
THE CYCLES OF ROMANCE*

C A M B R I D G E
U N I V E R S I T Y P R E S S
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WIDSITH MAÐOLAD

þorð hond onlæc reðe mæst mæsi þa oph
ærðan folca gendr fshidr eft he flettr gehab
mirus licne mæðhum lune from myrgingum æfe
le on pocon he mid alli hilde fælhe fiaðhu pebban
fornan riðe hned cymingf haim ge woltre wæstan
of engle wæmin næf fiaðf fæl logan ontonha
swim wætan fela ic monna geffiaðni mæðhum fæl
dan fæl hæda gehyrle haupum liffan wæl æftr
ofnum edle nætan reðe hir hæðan fæl gehæn pile.

THE CAMBRIDGE BOOK OF PROSE AND VERSE

IN ILLUSTRATION OF ENGLISH
LITERATURE

*FROM THE BEGINNINGS TO
THE CYCLES OF ROMANCE*

EDITED BY

GEORGE SAMPSON, M.A.
ST JOHN'S COLLEGE

C A M B R I D G E

AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS

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PREFACE

THE present volume offers to general readers a selection of passages to illustrate the first volume of *The Cambridge History of English Literature*. It may in time achieve an independent existence, but it begins as the small child of that large parent. Its sections are named from the titles to the chapters, and its headnotes occasionally quote passages from the text. The main matter of the headnotes as well as the choice and arrangement of the extracts are, however, the editor's own, and the scholars who wrote the chapters of the *History* must not be blamed for his shortcomings.

Some general principles governing the printing and spelling of the pieces are discussed in the Introduction, and need not be mentioned here. The text has been read with care, and some passages have been revised from the manuscripts; but the volume makes no claim to be a new recension of any text. It is, for the general reader, something more useful than that: it is a selection from, and therefore a guide to, the available books. That one or two recent publications are not referred to is due simply to the fact that most of the book was in type before they appeared.

The works here represented are, as a rule, known to ordinary readers merely as names in a book and left unread. Someone to whom I mentioned this volume cheerfully confessed his ignorance and said, 'To tell you the truth, I'm afraid of all those fellows whose names end in "Wulf".' Possibly a too rigidly academic attitude of scholars has helped to keep the 'Wulfs' from the door of the ordinary reader's library. Perhaps this selection, cheerfully presented, may help to break down a prejudice and show the alleged Wulfs as perfect lambs.

With this volume I should like to associate the name of A. R. Waller, formerly Secretary to the University Press and a joint editor of the originating *History*. We turned o'er many books together. With affectionate sternness he tried to keep me in the paths of brevity; but by the time we reached the Norman Conquest he abandoned hope, and left me to my own garrulity. If the spirit of a true book-lover still concerns itself with terrestrial print, he will be pleased to find our names together on this page.

Specific acknowledgments to translators, editors and publishers are made in the list of pieces; but I should like to pay here my personal tribute of thanks to all who have helped to make the volume possible.

GEORGE SAMPSON

BARNES, S.W.

21 Sept. 1924

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Plate

I. THE EXETER BOOK: WIDSITH FRONTISPICE

The print shows the lower portion of f. 84 b containing the beginning of the poem as printed on p. 1. It will be seen that the words *monna* (l. 2) and *on* (l. 3) have been supplied, and that there are a few other emendations.

II. BEOWULF FACE 14

This is f. 163 a of Cott. Vitell. A xv. The print shows the damaged condition of the manuscript. At line 5 begins the passage quoted on p. xxv of the Introduction.

III. THE ROMAN HAND FACE 54

A page (much reduced) from Cott. Vesp. A 1, which contains the Psalms in Jerome's earlier version. The manuscript was written in England during the eighth century. The letter-form is that known as the *uncial*, i.e. a rounded letter owing something to the capital or majuscule. There are no joinings. The MS is an excellent example of the Roman hand which was brought here by Augustine and flourished for a short time in the south. See p. 13. An interlinear Anglo-Saxon translation in minuscules was added in the ninth century. The page shows the conclusion of Ps. LXI and the beginning of Ps. LXII in the English numbering.

IV. BEDE'S ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY: THE POINTED MINUSCULE FACE 65

This is part of a page from Cott. Tib. C ii, written in England in the eighth century in the pointed Anglo-Irish minuscule, i.e. in what we should call 'small hand.' It will be seen that the 'capital' forms of III and IV have gone, and that the letters are closely joined. Indeed, the unpractised reader may find some difficulty in separating all the letters. The large initial belongs to the words *Historia ecclesiastica*, written in red ink, and scarcely distinguishable in the present print. In the ornamental oblong the interlaced letters of *Anno* can easily be made out. The passage is the beginning of the fourth book of the *History*, and it reads thus: *Anno memorato praefatae eclypsis et mox sequentis pestilentiae quo et colman unanima catholicorum intentione superatus ad suos reuersus est Deusdedit sextus eclesiae doruernensis episcopus obiit pridie iduū juliarū; sed et erconbercht....*

Plate

V. THE LINDISFARNE GOSPELS: THE HALF-UNCIAL. FACE 97

This is f. 29 of Cott. Nero D IV, the great Lindisfarne Gospels, written 690-700 in the northern half-uncial hand and ornamented in the finest style of Anglo-Celtic art. See pp. 13 and 97. A small monochrome print gives but a slight idea of the splendour of the original. The first line reads 'incipit euangelium secundum mattheū.' The passage begins at v. 18 of the Vulgate: 'Christi autem generatio sic erat: cum esset desponsata mater eius Maria Joseph.' It will be seen that combined or monogrammatic forms are used, e.g. the *em* of *autem* and the *gene* of *generatio*.

VI. LAYAMON'S BRUT

This is part of the first page of Cott. Calig. A ix. The original has pleasing decorations in red and blue. It was written in the thirteenth century. This is how it begins:

‘Incipit hystoria brutonum.

An preost wes on leoden: lazamon wes ihoten. He wes
leouenaðes sone: liðe him beo drihtē. He wonede at ernleze: at
aeðelen are chirechen. vppen seuarne staþe: sel þar him þuhte.
On fest radestone: þer he bock radde. Hit com him on mode:
& on his mern thonke. þer he wolde of engle: þa aethelan
tellen. Wat heo ihoten weoren: & wonene heo comen. þa englene
londe: aerest ahten. Aefter þan flode: þe from drihtene com.
þe al her a-quelde: quic þat he funde buten moe & sem: japhet &
cham. & heore four wiues: þe mid heom weren on archen.
Lazamō gon liðen: wide zond þaf leode. & bi-won þa aeðela boc:
þa he to bisne nom. He nom þa englisca boc: þa makede seint
beda. an oþer he nom on latin: þa makede seinte albin. & þe
feire austin: þe fulluht broute hider in. hoc he nom þe þridde:
leide ther amidden.'

Plate

VII. CURSOR MUNDI

FACE 353

This is part of a page from MS R. 3, 8, Trin. Coll. Camb. It gives part of the passage printed on p. 353, but in a different text. The contractions (especially that for *er*) will be easily identified:

If oure may wynne his in stoures
 þat þei be ouris & her heires
 If þei wynne oures we be þeires
 Here I bide my self redy
 For to fȝte for oure party.
 Vche day he coom in place
 And batail bed wiþ suche manace
 Euer whenne þe folke him sawe
 Hem stood þenne of him ful greet awe
 ¶ Allas seide saul þe kyng þan
 Where shal we fynde a man
 þat dar þe batail for my sake
 Aȝeyn þis þeof vndirtake
 Who so wolde fȝte him aȝeyn
 And him ouercome in batail pleyn
 He shulde be riche al his lyue
 And haue my douȝtir to his wyue.
 ¶ Dauid þis herde & forþ gan stonde
 Sir he seide holde me couenonde
 I trowe trewely in goddes myȝt
 þat I shal vndirtake þe fȝt
 Aȝeyn goly þat is so grym
 Wiþ goddes grace sle shal I him
 Aȝeyn þe zondir wrecched þing
 For soþe haue I no drede sir kyng
 he trusteþ al in his owne hand
 And I in god al weldand.

Plate

VIII. A PAGE OF SONGS FACE 366

This is a page from the little volume—a minstrel's pocket-book of songs—known as Sloane 2593 (B.M.). It belongs to the fifteenth century. The first song is that given on p. 366. The contractions will be easily followed. The second song is the almost equally familiar 'I have a gentle Cock':

I have a gentil cook · crowyt me day—
 He doth me rysyn erly · my matynis for to say—
 I have a gentil cook · comyn he is of gret—
 His comb is of reed corel · his tayil is of get—
 I have a gentyl cook · comyn he is of kynde—
 His comb is of red scorel · his tayl is of inde—
 His legges ben of asour · so genitil & so smale—
 His spores arn of sylver · qwyt in to the wortewale—
 His eynyn arn of cristal · lokyn al in aumbry—
 & every nyȝt he perchit hym · in myn ladyis chaumbyr.

The lines at the foot of the page are the beginning of a piece of nonsense rhyme:

Omnes gentes plaudite—
 I saw myny bryddis setyn on a tre—
 He tokyn here fleyȝt & flowyn away—
 With ego dixi have good day.
 Many qwyte federes hȝȝt the pye
 I may noon more syngyn my lyppis arn so drye.

INTRODUCTION

LITERATURE has no existence for later ages until it is written down. What songs the Piltdown Man sang as he pursued and subsequently consumed his foes can be less easily conjectured than the song of the Sirens. Our oldest surviving literature is a thing of yesterday compared with the known duration of man. We point with pride to the long line of English poets; yet we have but to go back thirteen centuries to find ourselves in the silence of complete obliteration. Tales were told and perished with the tellers. There is no British literature, and, in a sense, there is no primitive English literature. What survives to us is certainly not the work of prentice hands. The writers of *Beowulf* and *The Wanderer* knew what they wanted to say and how to say it. They were not struggling after expression. For signs of that struggle we must come down later in time, and turn, not to Old, but to Middle English literature. Layamon's *Brut* is more archaic than *Beowulf*, which is a literary epic, as civilised as Morris's *Jason* and *Sigurd*. We are apt to think it primitive merely because it is ancient in matter, and written in a tongue that has long ceased to be spoken. But the authors or compilers had full technical command of a very adequate language of poetry. There is none of the faltering that we find in the *Canute Song* or the *Godric Hymns*, and none of the feeble jog-trot that makes *King Horn* a weariness. *Beowulf* narrates epically the deeds of primitive heroes, but the poem itself is no more primitive than *The Iliad*.

How precarious is the fate of any written product before print has given it the safety of numbers can be gathered from the fact that almost all the known body of Anglo-Saxon poetry is contained in four damaged and dangerously imperilled volumes. As frequent reference is made to these manuscripts in the following pages, a brief note on them may be given at once. Let us begin with the *Genesis* of English literature.

1. *Beowulf*. This is contained in the volume technically known as MS Cotton Vitellius A xv in the British Museum.

Its existence was first publicly remarked by Humfrey Wanley in the Catalogue of Old English MSS which he contributed to George Hickes's *Linguarum Veterum Septentrionalium Thesaurus* etc. (1703-5). In 1731 a fire broke out in the house at Westminster where lay the priceless collection of manuscripts formed by the great antiquary Sir Robert Cotton, who had been fretted to death by royal persecution a century before. Among the injured treasures was the volume containing *Beowulf*. No transcript had ever been made or been thought worth making. It is insufficiently understood that Robert Cotton is an Englishman to whom national gratitude is perpetually due. He was not the most discreet or meek of men; but without his extraordinary instinct and passion for old parchments, many a document vitally necessary for the understanding of our history and literature would have gone the way of all other lost and perished things. Yet he is never mentioned among our national benefactors; no one has troubled to tell his story in either a scholarly or a popular way; and his only monument is the name borne by a part of the manuscript collection in the British Museum. His precious books, neglected and damaged, were formally transferred in 1700 to the nation (which had in effect already seized them) by his great-grandson Sir John Cotton; and, as we have seen, some of them were burnt before adequate protection had been given to them. Robert Cotton had distributed his books in fourteen presses or cases surmounted by busts of the twelve Caesars, with Cleopatra and Faustina added, and the Cotton manuscripts are still described by their old press names. Thus the volume containing *Beowulf* is 'Vitellius A xv,' the *Lindisfarne Gospels* is 'Nero D iv,' and Layamon's *Brut* is contained in 'Caligula A ix.' The first copy of *Beowulf* was made by Thorkelin in 1787 and published in *De Danorum Rebus Gestis Secul. III et IV* (1815). A photographic facsimile of the manuscript is number 77 in the Early English Text Society's publications. That the manuscript survived for so many centuries is a miracle, and that it was not destroyed in 1731 is a crowning mercy, for not a line of the poem is found in any other manuscript. It is, in every sense, a unique thing.

2. *The Exeter Book*. This great source-book has had a comparatively uneventful history. It was presented to the Exeter cathedral library in 1071 by bishop Leofric and has been there

ever since. It is described as 'I mycel Englisc boc be gewhilcum þingum on leod-wisan gewohrt.' (One large English book on all sorts of things in verse-manner wrought.) These are some of the contents: The *Christ* poems, *Legend of St Guthlac*, *The Phoenix*, *Legend of St Juliana*, *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer*, *Widsith*, *Deor*, *The Ruin*, various *Riddles* and religious pieces. Still the most complete edition of the whole manuscript is *Codex Exoniensis* (1842), edited for the Society of Antiquaries by the admirable scholar Benjamin Thorpe. One volume only of a new edition by Sir Israel Gollancz is at present available.

3. *The Vercelli Book*. This manuscript was discovered in the cathedral library at Vercelli, between Milan and Turin, by F. Blume, a German scholar, in 1822. No one has explained how, when or why an Anglo-Saxon manuscript written ten centuries ago came to find a home in a small city of Piedmont. The volume contains twenty-three *Homilies*, *Andreas*, *The Fates of the Apostles*, *Soul and Body*, *A Dream of the Rood*, and *Elene*. Part of it was reproduced in facsimile by Richard Wölker (1894), and J. M. Kemble, a great English scholar, edited *Poetry of the Codex Vercellensis* (Aelfric Society, 1843 and 1856). An excellent facsimile of the whole MS is contained in *Il Codice Vercellese*, ed. Förster (Rome, 1913).

4. *The Junius Manuscript*. This was found by Archbishop Ussher about 1630 and given by him to Francis Dujon (1589–1677), a Dutch scholar of German birth, librarian to the Earl of Arundel and a friend of Milton. Junius (he is better known in the Latinized form of his name) published an edition of the poems at Amsterdam in 1655. With other manuscripts of Junius this came back to England, and it is now in the Bodleian—MS Bodl. Junius, xi. It contains poetical paraphrases of Scripture, viz. *Genesis*, *Exodus*, *Daniel*, *Christ and Satan*, once attributed to Caedmon, with about fifty crude but delightful drawings representing scenes from Genesis. They are excellently reproduced in *Archaeologia*, vol. xxiv. (1832), and on a much smaller scale in *The Caedmon Poems* by Charles W. Kennedy (1916). The whole Junian Codex has been edited in facsimile by Sir Israel Gollancz.

If the reader will glance again at the contents of these manuscripts, and consider how many poems owe their existence to a freak of chance that has saved alive four old and perishable books

from the wrecks of a thousand years, he should wonder, not that there is so little Old English literature, but that there is so much. What has vanished we cannot begin to conjecture. During the space of four centuries—for twice the time between Wordsworth and Shakespeare—Britain was part of the Roman Empire; but there remains not a trace of any literary activity here in the period that gave Apuleius and Augustine to Africa, Ammianus to Antioch, Ausonius to France and Quintilian to Spain. Of all the literature produced in the six hundred years between the coming of Hengist and the death of Harold no more has survived than a single generation could have written.

I have given to the contents of the four manuscripts the names by which they are generally known; but these must be understood as editorial inventions. The old writer or scribe rarely used what we call a title, and he wrote straight on, usually marking the beginning of a piece or section with a decorated initial, or large capitals, or an *implicit*; and the end with an *explicit* or *amen*. See, for example, the beginning of *Widsith*, Bede's *History*, Layamon's *Brut*, and the page of lyrics. The titles were given by the first editors, and later editors have occasionally approved neither names nor divisions. The matter does not really concern the general reader, but one instance of disagreement may interest him. Among the contents of the *Vercelli Book* I have included *Andreas* and *Fata Apostolorum*, these being thought to be two separate poems. Some scholars, however, notably W. W. Skeat, have objected to the separation, and declared that we have here one poem, its subject being the Twelve Apostles. Andrew is dealt with at some length because his adventures in rescuing Matthew attracted the writer, but there is no reason for supposing that Andrew was given a poem to himself. The arguments of Skeat are an admirable example of the ‘higher criticism’ as used by one who was a man of letters as well as a great scholar; but though I incline to his view, I do not adopt it in the present volume mainly because the general view is best for the general reader.

The earlier periods of our literature have been too much regarded as the special concern of examinees, who struggle through a text (with its commentary) and dutifully write notes about works which they have never seen. Examinations in English being what they are, it is still possible to find a candidate at a

university examination attempting to write about (say) *The Mirror for Magistrates* without knowing whether it is a play, a poem, a prose work or a collection. But with the English *babu*, who takes all literature as his province, I am not at the moment concerned. English literature belongs, not to the examinee but to everyman. There is no reason why the ordinary reader should not enjoy Middle English lyrics as he enjoys Burns or Barnes. What he needs is not an elaborate linguistic apparatus, but a running gloss, which I have here tried to give him. This, of course, is not said in depreciation of linguistic scholarship. The services to humane letters of our great philological scholars have been as noble as they have usually been ill-requited. We should be grateful; but surely one way of love is the use of what has been given us. We cannot all be scholars. Literature is first of all to be enjoyed; and the plain man who wants to read has a right to take as much pleasure as he can in every region of letters. Actually, the student, the scholar in the making, is well supplied with texts. The ordinary reader is not. It is the ordinary reader that I have had first of all in mind, and his needs have given the work both its general character and certain peculiarities of detail.

Thus, I have assumed that the reader will not be familiar with Old English (or Anglo-Saxon), and the literature earlier than the thirteenth century is therefore represented by translations. I have given, however, a specimen of early verse and late prose in the original to show what the language looked like. Opinions of some heat are occasionally expressed about the right method of translating out of Old English. Some maintain that poems in Anglo-Saxon should be treated like poems in any other language, ancient or modern, and translated into standard English verse. Others declare that no translation is acceptable that does not reproduce the metrical structure of Old English poetry, or at least convey an effect of primitive antiquity. Others, less contentious, resort to plain prose. One eminent reader has cynically declared that though *Beowulf* may have been many times translated out of Anglo-Saxon it has never yet been translated into English. The plain man must beware of all the extremists. There is no one best way or right way of translation out of any language. Each has its advantages and each has its inevitable defects. I have made the present selections represent

nearly all the forms of translation. Mr Scott-Moncrieff's version of *Beowulf* was published too late for me to use in the text, so I give a few lines here to illustrate the quality and the manner of it. The passage given is that rendered in prose on p. 16:

In a doubtful land

Dwell they, wolf-shapes, windy nesses,
 Fearsome fen-paths, where the force from the mountains
 Under misty nesses netherwards floweth,
 A flood under the fields. 'Tis not far from hence
 As miles are marked that the mere standeth,
 Above which hang rimy bowers,
 A wood fast-rooted the water o'er-shadows.
 There will, every night, a wonder be seen,
 Fire in the flood. There is none found so wise
 Of the sons of men, who has sounded those depths,
 Though the heath-stepper, by hounds sore swinked,
 The hart strong of horn the holt-wood seek,
 Put to flight from afar, life freely he selleth,
 His soul on the shore, sooner than therein will he
 Hide his head.

In William Morris's version the passage reads thus:

They dwell in a dim hidden land,
 The wolf-bents they hide in, on the nesses the windy,
 The perilous fen-paths where the stream of the fell-side
 Midst the mists of the nesses wends netherward ever,
 The flood under earth. Naught far away hence,
 But a mile-mark forsooth, there standeth the mere,
 And over it ever hang groves all berimed,
 The wood fast by the roots over-helmeth the water.
 But each night may one a dread wonder there see,
 A fire in the flood. But none liveth so wise
 Of the bairns of mankind that the bottom may know.
 Although the heath-stepper beswinked by the hounds,
 The hart strong of horns, that holt-wood should seek to,
 Driven fleeing from far, he shall sooner leave life,
 Leave life-breath on the bank, or ever will he
 Therein hide his head.

F. B. Gummere renders it thus:

Untrod is their home;
 By wolf-cliffs haunt they and windy headlands,
 Fenways fearful, where flows the stream
 From mountains gliding to gloom of the rocks,
 Underground flood. Not far is it hence
 In measure of miles that the mere expands,
 And o'er it the frost-bound forest hanging
 Sturdily rooted, shadows the wave.

By night is a wonder weird to see,
 Fire on the waters. So wise lived none
 Of the sons of men, to search those depths.
 Nay, though the heath-rover, hunted by dogs,
 The horn-proud hart, that holt should seek,
 Long distance driven, his dear life first
 On the brink he yields ere he brave the plunge
 To hide his head.

This is the version of J. Duncan Spaeth:

Lonely and waste is the land they inhabit,
 Wolf-cliffs wild and windy headlands,
 Ledges of mist, where mountain torrents
 Downward plunge to dark abysses,
 And flow unseen. Not far from here
 O'er the moorland in miles, a mere expands:
 Spray-frosted trees o'er-spread it, and hang
 O'er the water with roots fast wedged in the rocks.
 There nightly is seen, beneath the flood,
 A marvellous light. There lives not a man
 Has fathomed the depth of the dismal mere.
 Though the heath-stepper, the strong-horned stag,
 Seek this cover, forspent with the chase,
 Tracked by the hounds, he will turn at bay,
 To die on the brink ere he brave the plunge,
 Hide his head in the haunted pool.

Here is the original:

Hie dygel lond	
warigeað, wulfleoðu,	windige naessas,
frecne fengelad,	ðaer fyrgenstream
under naessa genipu	níper gewiteð,
flod under foldan.	Nis þaet feor heonon
milgemarces	þaet se mere standeð,
ofer þaem hongiað	hringde bearwas,
wudu wyrtum faest	waeter oferhelmað.
þaer maeg nihta gehwaem	niðwundor seon,
fyr on flode;	no þaes fród leofað
gumena bearna	þaet he þone grund wite.
ðeah þe haeðstapa	hundum geswenced,
heorot hornum trum,	holtwudu sece,
feorran geflymed,	aer he feorh seleð,
aldor on ofre,	aer he in wille
hafelan hydan.	

The reader will see that the Anglo-Saxon has a way of its own which resembles nothing in modern English. The rimeless lines divide into halves, and each half has normally two strong accents (irrespective of the number of syllables), all (or some) of

the accented syllables being alliterated—three in each line being the usual number. Double alliteration is occasionally found. For examples of later alliterated verse see the extracts on pp. 310–339. This alliterated verse was originally a kind of chant, the alliteration itself marking strong accents. Possibly the nearest parallel we have to it is the ‘pointing’ of the Psalms in the Church Service, that is, the fitting of lines with no fixed number of syllables to a fixed form of chant which has three accents in the first half and four accents in the second, a pause separating the two halves. The 114th Psalm thus begins:



When Israel came out of Egypt : and the house of Jacob from a-
Jú-dah wás his sánctuary: and I's - rael his do- mínióñ
The sea saw thát and fled : Jór-dán was dríven hák-

I have assumed that the general reader is unlikely to be familiar with the Latin of Bede and the later chroniclers and scholars, and I have represented them by a selection from the existing translations. Some of these versions are far from good, either as renderings or as literature; but no one seems anxious to take up the task of making better ones. That is a pity. People too seldom consider how much of our mediaeval literature is in Latin. Geoffrey of Monmouth, Walter Map, Gerald of Wales, Roger Bacon and Matthew Paris are great native writers who are as foreign to most of us as Thomas Aquinas or Albertus Magnus. I suggest that the translation of our mediaeval Latin literature is a task more worthy of post-graduate labour than some of the ‘fancy’ pieces of research to which universities occasionally give their approval. A few years’ concerted teamwork among our professors and their best pupils would open a new world of literature to English readers.

In the Middle English section I have given sometimes a gloss and sometimes a modern version. As I specially wished to avoid stressing the remoteness of Middle English, I have not used any obsolete characters, except in illustrative quotations. A reference to pp. 172 and 436 will make clear the nature and peculiarity of these letters. The Middle English scribe wrote down what we

call *nicht* as *nizt*, and he pronounced it (with some variation) as a Scotsman says *nicht*. How are we to render this in modern spelling? Some scholars prefer *niht*, others *night*. I have made no attempt at rigid consistency, and I have used either form, when there has been any declared preference or general tendency. Where *ȝ* is used as in *ȝif* and *ȝzen* (*i.e.* in a stressed position), I have represented it by *y*. When William of Shoreham spells *out* as *ouȝt* I have omitted the symbol as superfluous. When *ȝ* appears as a final, as in *besteȝ*, I have represented it by *s* or *ȝ*. The interchangeable *p* and *ð* are represented uniformly by *th*. I have, of course, not attempted to reproduce contractions or other manuscript peculiarities. Indeed, I am inclined to regret that I did not use the modern conventions of printing uniformly in all pieces. Our aim is pleasure, not palaeography.

What the reader must constantly remember is that much in this volume endured the vicissitudes of oral transmission, and that all of it belongs to the days before printing. Language is literally ‘tongue-age.’ It is the spoken word. Writing is the attempt to represent speech on paper. A schoolboy’s ‘dictation’ will show how precarious is our hold upon the written word, and how many disguises the same word may assume in writing. The Middle English scribes were shaky and various in their spelling, not quite for the schoolboy’s reason, but because there was no accepted convention of spelling, and could not be till the coming of printing. People like the north-western Orm and the south-eastern Dan Michel who had the instinct of born phoneticians were very rare. As our specimens range over several centuries and represent several districts the reader must be prepared for oddities of orthography; but these will soon cease to be disconcerting. What may puzzle him most is not some unusual or obsolete word, but an apparently familiar word with an unfamiliar meaning. These and similar difficulties will vanish after a little reading. One learns to read simply by reading. Scraps of Old English grammar are not very helpful to the beginner. What he needs is a wary eye for the forms that deceive by their resemblance to modern words of different meaning. Let us take a few examples. *On* (pronounced like the last syllable in *atone*) is sometimes *one*, sometimes *only*, and sometimes *on*; and *on* itself is occasionally spelt *one*. *One* is never pronounced as *wun*. *Also* is sometimes *so* or *as*, and *so* itself is used for *as*. *But* in the

sense of *unless*, and *of* in the sense of *off* or *from*, will not be troublesome; but *he* and *here* (meaning *they* and *their*) may catch the unwary, and so may *whose* (two syllables) for *whoso*. The double or triple negative is regular, and forms like *nas* for *was not*, *nere* for *were not*, and *nolde* for *would not* are constant. *That* for *what* (as in the familiar line, ‘*That thee is sent receyve in buxumnesse*’) is usual. A few quotations will make this clearer:

- (a) Bondemen with *here* gaddes (their).
- (b) *Als he comen* from the plow (as they).
- (c) Seththen we first togider were,
Ones wroth never we *nere* (once, were not).
- (d) By her clothes he knew that it was *he* (she).
- (e) And *also a* wente theder right (as he).
- (f) Appone the compas ther clewide kynges *one rawe* (in a row).
- (g) Bot in his *on* hand, etc. (one).
- (h) *On* the moste on the molde on mesure hyghe (one).
- (i) *On* alpi word ich lie *nelle* (a, will not).
- (j) Wery *so* water in wore (as).
- (k) Bote he me wolle to *hire* take (her).
- (l) For *y not* whider *y shal* (know not).
- (m) Never yete *y nuste* non (knew not).
- (n) *Nefde* he *nenne sune* (had not, no son).
- (o) *Whose* thenchith up this carful lif (whoso).

How should we pronounce Middle English? This is a question not easily answered. The student will of course pay due attention to the phonetic restoration of the old pronunciation; but in something that is just as important in speech as pronunciation, namely intonation, I fear no one can help him. For general use, however, one should avoid (I think) making Middle English sound too remote from modern English, even though the remoter sounds may be authentic. It is certain that we do not pronounce Shakespeare as Shakespeare pronounced it, so there is no reason why we should not carry our current speech back still further. But just as modern pronunciation breaks down in Shakespeare when we get a line like ‘Your mind is tossing on the ocean,’ so it will often play havoc with the rime and rhythm of earlier poetry. Let us be reasonable in this as in everything. We have to remember that in Middle English speech French is not very far away. The opening lines of

Chaucer's *Prologue* will falter unless *licour* and *vertu* are sounded more like French than modern English; nay, as we have seen, we must sometimes 'Frenchify' Shakespeare himself. Well, let us do it when it is necessary. Where is the sense in trying to pronounce as *pashn* a word that Robert of Brunne writes as *passyowne*? It is impossible to give modern accent to passages like the following without robbing them of all their metre:

'Brother,' seyde Gamelyn, 'by seynt Richer,
Thou must lene me to-nyght a litel courser.'

Mombraunt is a riche cite
In al the lond of Sarsine
Nis ther non ther to iliche
Ne be fele parti so riche.

We can get near the rhythm of the first if we remember

At Aerschot upleaped of a sudden the sun,
And against him the cattle stood black every one,

and of the second if we remember

Mountains on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks and rivers wide.

The two difficulties most likely to trouble unpractised readers of Middle English are the sounding of certain weak vowels (especially the final *e*) and the placing of the accent in certain words. No simple rules can be given. The ear must be our chief guide in early as it is in later poetry. Thus, the same page of a modern text of *Hamlet* gives us 'he hath much talked of you' and 'my too much changed son,' and there is nothing but the ear to tell us that *talked* is a monosyllable and *changed* a dissyllable. So, when we find in Chaucer the line 'For leveful is, with force force of-showve,' the ear should tell us that the first *force* is a dissyllable and the second a monosyllable. Really the only simple rule that can be given is, Sound a weak final or medial *e* when it is clearly wanted, or alternatively, don't sound it when it is clearly unwanted. It is not sounded, for instance, before another vowel or before most words beginning with *h*. Thus in a line like 'Ich helpe monne on either halve,' the *e* is sounded at the end of *helpe* but not at the end of *monne*. There is nothing strange in this. When we sing in French 'Salut, demeure chaste et pure,' or 'Et songe bien, oui, songe en com-

battant,' we give three syllables to *demeure*, two to *pure*, and only one to *chaste*, and we sound the *e* in the first *songe* but not in the second. In other words, *songe* is metrically equivalent to *songe en*. Middle English verse is not a matter of rigid rule; it is as free and flexible as the most modern. Dryden, admiring, as he could not but admire, the almost Shakespearean fulness and energy of Chaucer, nevertheless declared that there are thousands of his verses 'which are lame for want of half a foot, and sometimes a whole one, and which no pronunciation can make otherwise.' It is astonishing that the ear and instinct of Dryden did not tell him how to read:

Of fairè, yongè, fresshè Venus free,
or,
To Thebès, with his oldè wallès wyde,
or,

Talès of best sentéce and moost solás.

The last line should remind us that in Middle English many dissyllabic and trisyllabic words, especially those of Romance origin, are accented on the last syllable of the singular. We now say *náture* and *coúrage*; but Chaucer writes, 'So priketh hem náture in her corágès.' Even here we must not assume that there is a fixed rule or practice. Though Chaucer writes,

And bathèd every veyne in swich licoúr
Of which vertú engendred is the flour,

he also writes,

To maken vértu of necessitee.

We must expect to find frequently in our reading such unfamiliar accents as *manére*, *alsó*, *merlíng*, *tresóre*, *begging*, *worthí*, *castél*, *myrácle*, *créatúre*, *júdgémént*, but we must also expect to find the accents falling sometimes as in modern pronunciation. A form like *parshe* for *parish* is instructive in another way.

Some of the rougher, earlier pieces in this volume will be found hardest to read. How the writers meant the *Canute Song* or the Godric *Hymns* to sound we can, in the present state of the text, only conjecture. The one certain fact about the metrics of early Middle English is that nothing is certain. There is unfortunately even now no accepted system of notation for English verse. In the examples quoted below, the signs – and ~ are used to denote respectively an accented and an unaccented syllable:

they are not used to denote length. A \times denotes a 'rest.' The lines are barred in *measures*, that is, the bars mark the fall of the accent, as in music, and as in music, there may be an up-beat (*anacrusis*) before the first bar. Again as in music, one kind of measure may sometimes be replaced by another, e.g. | - ~ | by | - ~ ~ | or by | - ~ ~ ~ |. The word 'measure' is not quite fortunate, for if | - ~ ~ | is merely a matter of accent, nothing is actually 'measured'; but I am anxious to avoid using both the word 'foot' and the traditional classical names of feet, which, in the present connection, would cause nothing but confusion.

Perhaps the *Canute Song* moved thus:

Mērē sūngēn mūn(e)chēs bīnnēn Ēlȳ
Thā Cnūt \times chýning rēū thēr bȳ
Rōwēth cnīhtēs nōēr thē lānd
And hērē wē thēs mūnēchēs sāng.

The Godric *Hymns* move irregularly, even though in MS Royal 5 F vii they are written under notes of music. They are attempts to imitate the rimed and accented Latin hymns, such as the series of verses known as *Hymni et Psalterium de Sancta Virgine Maria* by St Anselm (Migne, *Patrol. Lat.* vol. 158, pp. 1038–1050). Here we find stanzas beginning with the usual rhythm 'Ave mater gloria,' 'Ave mater pietatis,' and others beginning with the almost equally common variation, 'Ave coelestis domina' or 'Ave quae Patris brachium.' These latter lines have set the movement of Godric's 'Sainte Marie Virgine.' A pair of lines in St Anselm gives us something very like Godric's first pair:

Ave mater pietatis
Cujus partus est altare Dei patris.

Save for an extra light syllable in the first line of the English and an extra measure in the second line of the Latin, this is Godric's

Sainte Marie Virgine
Moder Jesu Cristes Nazarene.

Possibly, then, the Hymn moved thus:

Saīntē Mā rē Virgī nē
Mōdēr Jēsū Crīstēs Nāzā rēnē
Ōnfō scild (x) hēlp thin Gōdric
Ōnfāng brīng hēh/līc wīth thē in Gōdēs rīc
Saīntē Mā rē Crīstēs būr
Maīdēnēs clēnhād mōdērēs flūr
Dilīē mīnē sīnnē rīxē in mīn mōd
Brīng mē tō wīnnē wīth thē sēlf (x) Gōd

But what is really important about these primitive songs is not how they move, but how they do *not* move. They do not move, they were plainly never meant to move, in the fashion of:

Hwaet we Gar-Dena in geardagum
 þeodcyninga þrym gefrunon
 nu ða aeþelingas ellen fremedon.

In other words they are important because they tell us that the old English movement of verse is doomed—that the ancient recitative is giving way before measures, rimes, assonance and stanzas, though not without a struggle that leaves its marks upon the supplanter. Amidst the confusion came two formative influences, the French octosyllabics (see the passage from Wace, p. 221) which gave us *The Owl and the Nightingale* and many later delightful pieces, and the Latin iambic septenarius (which we may call the ‘Good king Wenceslas’ metre), familiar in:

Meum est propositum in taberna mori,
 Vinum sit appositum morientis ori,
 Ut dicant cum venerint angelorum chori
 ‘Deus sit propitius huic potatori.’

This produced as its first known English offspring *Poema Morale* and *Ormulum*, and later the doggerel ‘fourteeners’ of early Elizabethan drama, such as these:

I beseech you heer, good Maister Judge, a poor man’s cause to tender,
 Condemn me not in wrongful wise that never was offender;

and (above all) the ballad metre, in which great things were shortly to be done. These influences will be mentioned again presently. The alliterative revival at a later period is a coda and full close marking the definite end of a great manner. Alliteration itself long survived, however, as a form of emphasis in certain popular pieces having rime and measures. See, for instance, the *Song of the Husbandman*, p. 396.

Layamon’s *Brut* shows us English verse almost in the very act of change. It has alliteration, free movement, assonance, rime and measures all in turn. It gives us the new without quite forgetting the old. Layamon was in fact writing with two tunes in his head: he was translating the syllabic couplets of Wace (see p. 221) while still thinking of the older verse. Lines like these,

Tha scipen biten on that sond,
 And al that folc eode on lond,

appear to behave like a true couplet; but then we find lines like these,

Ich hatte Hengest Hors is mi brother,
We beoth of Alemainne athelest alre lande,

which have gone back to pure alliteration. How Layamon meant his lines to sound, whether he meant them to move alike, whether he made a deliberate difference in their movement, or whether, like some other poets, he was simply a bad metrist, no one can say definitely. The most self-confident of scholars can do no more than conjecture. Later echoes of the Layamon manner can be heard in *King Horn* (p. 249) and *The Proverbs of Alfred* (p. 204). Even these show some variety; but we are often reminded of the familiar hymn,

Lord, thy word abideth,
And our footsteps guideth.

The movement of *Poema Morale* (p. 174) is that of the septenarius, generally with anacrusis. When we read lines like these,

Ích | ém nū | áldér | thēne ich | wēs, á|wintér | ánd á | lárē, |
Ich | wéldē | mārē | thēne ich | dēde, mī | wit áh|tē bōn | mārē, |

we are reminded, though with a difference of rime, of another 'moral ode':

O ye wha are sae guid yoursel, Sae pious and sae holy,
Ye've nought to do but mark and tell Your neebours' fauts and folly.

In places (*e.g.* ll. 4-7) there is no anacrusis, and some syllabic freedom, as here:

| Éldē | m'is bī|stōlēn | ón x̄ | ēr x̄ | ich it | wistē |
Ne | mich'tich | seōn bī- | fōrē | mē fōr | smikē | nē fōr | mīstē |,

where we have twelve syllables balanced against fifteen.

Fortunately for us, the ruthlessly systematic Orm shaped his metre as inflexibly as his spelling, and every one of his multitudinous verses can be fitted to the pattern of this:

Ācc | thū shällt | findēn | thāt mīn | wōrd, ē33|whāer thāet | itt iss | ēkedd |

Thus, on the very threshold of Middle English poetry, Orm hammers out an iron tune that tolls the knell of parting alliterative verse.

But though it perished, its ghost was to haunt us for ever

after. However greatly English metre changes, it remains the same thing in one respect, namely, syllabic freedom. It never forgets the time when the number of syllables in a line might vary, as long as the accents fell recognisably. And so, from the crude singer of the *Canute Song* to the most polished young bard of to-day, our poets have held themselves free to use groups of one, two, three or four syllables as metrical equivalents. This was almost impossible in French poetry, and so the chief difficulty of Middle English metrics lies here, that two incompatible systems met and tried to keep house together. We have seen that Old English alliterative verse, like the chanted psalm, tolerated a varying number of syllables in the lines, and got its rhythmic shape from the recurrent fall of stresses. Now French verse developed along lines entirely different. It chose for its way of movement a fixed number of syllables, grouped, not by the fall of accent, but by the recurrence of *caesura* or pause. In the centuries after the Conquest, when the two languages were living side by side, and the literate person spoke both, with Latin for a third (witness the number of poems in which two languages are used), some confusion of the metrical systems would naturally arise. In so far as he was French, our literate person would accept lines in which the number of syllables appeared to be correct, without any regard to the number or incidence of stresses; and in so far as he was English, he would accept lines in which the accents appeared to have a regular fall, without regard to the number of syllables or incidence of *caesura*. Happily bilingual, he could almost instinctively adapt himself to either system; we cannot. Possibly the poets themselves sometimes halted between two opinions. We must not assume that all the Middle English verse which has happened to survive was the work of perfect metrists. So, in the end, we have to fall back on the ear as our guide.

Paternoster, *The Panther* and other pieces in the following pages give us the earliest examples of a specially delightful English verse-form, the octosyllabic couplet, child of France, but, from the beginning, going its own way with English freedom. The poems in stanzas will offer little difficulty. How far what seems to be occasional irregularity is merely an error of transmission no one can say. We must make the best of what we have. Certainly there is little the matter with such a stanza as this:

| Hwēr īs | Pārīs | ānd Hē|lēyne |
 Thāt | wērēn sō | brȳht ānd | fēyre ön | blēo |
 | Āmādās | Tristrām | ānd Di|dēyne |
 | | Ysēu|dē ānd | āllē | théo | (or | Ÿ | x̄ | seūde ānd | āllē | thēo |)
 | Ectōr | with hīs | schārpē | mēyne |
 Ānd | Cēsār | riche öf | wōrl-dēs | fēo |
 Hē | beōth ź | glýdēn | ūt öf thē | rēyne |
 | Sō thē | schéft īs | öf thē | clēo. |

This is not unworthy to be set beside the famous interrogation of two centuries later:

Dictes moy ou, n'en quel pays,
 Est Flora, la belle Rōmaine,
 Archipiada, ne Thais,
 Qui fut sa cousine germaine;
 Echo parlant quand bruyt on maine
 Dessus riviere ou sus estan,
 Qui beaulté ot trop plus qu'humaine?
 Mais ou sont les neiges d'antan?

An apparently irregular line in the second stanza on p. 199 can be read thus:

| Thēyh hē | wēre sō | rīchē | mōn |
 | Ås Hēn- | rŷ x̄ | ūrē | kȳng. |

A slight alteration in the opening lines of a familiar hymn gives us the movement of *Sir Libeaus*:

To thee our God we fly,
 O hear our lowly cry,
 For mercy and for grace.

That is just the metre (save for one dropped syllable) of:

That time Libeaus gan ride
 Be a river side
 And sigh a fair cité.

The song on p. 381 begins thus:

I sýkē whén I sínge
 For sórewe thát y sé,
 Whén y wíth wypíngē
 Behóld upón the tré.

Stabat Mater, on p. 388, is written to the model of the Latin, save that the English lines sometimes have the up-beat and the Latin never:

| Stōnd wēl | mōdēr | ūndēr | rōdē |
 Bŷ|hōld thŷ | sōne wíth | glādē | mōdē |
 | Blythē | mōdēr | mȳht thōu | bē |
 | Sōne hōu | shūlde ź | blȳthē | stōndē |
 Ÿ | sē thīn | fēt, ź | sē thīn | hōndē |
 | Nāylēd | tō thē | hārdē | trē. |

This is quite a fair imitation of:

Stabat Mater dolorosa
Juxta crucem lacrymosa
Dum pendebat filius:
Cuius animam gementem
Contristatam et dolentem
Pertransivit gladius.

Generally it will be felt that in Middle English poetry we are moving among very familiar metres. But one great strain is lacking, the decasyllabic line of five measures, which, in blank verse or rimed couplet, was to be the master strain of all our song. For this we had to wait till Chaucer dawned upon the world of English poetry.

There are a few special points of spelling and pronunciation to which attention may be called. The difference between *siththen*, *seththen* and *suththen* (since) can be still heard. If we listen to the varieties in the pronunciation of a word like *kitchen* between Arundel and Aberdeen, or to the adventures of *it* on the way from Dover to Dublin, we shall marvel that, in the days before print had fixed a convention of spelling, the chaos of orthography was not greater than it is. Such differences as *schal*, *shal*, *sal* and *ssal* represent attempts to write down the word that we spell *shall*. Forms like *quo* (who), *quen* (when), *quare* (where), *quat* (what), *quyt* (white) occurring in the Northumbrian *Cursor Mundi* and the north-western *Pearl* and *Syr Gawayne* indicate, not a peculiarity of pronunciation, but a method of representing the aspirate *hw*, and so they must not be pronounced as if they began with *kw*. Really they should be spelt *quh-*, a distinction thus being made between *quh* = *hw* (or *wh* as we now write it), and *qu* = *kw*. The difference would then be clear between *quhair* = *where* and *quair* = *book*, and between *quhyt* = *white* and *quyt* = *quite*. In northern forms the letter *l* is sometimes inserted in a word (e.g. *walir* = *water* and *chalmer* = *chamber*) to preserve the broad sound of the vowel. The letter is merely ‘catalytic’ in its action, and should not be pronounced.

As I have said in the Preface the volume is not a new re-cension of the text, but a selection from the available books, and, so far, a guide to them. When these have their peculiarities, such as the use of *i* for *j* (as in *ioye*, *mariorys*) I have kept them.

There is little merit in mechanical consistency; moreover, the reader might as well learn from an anthology that editors differ about details of this kind, and that details do not matter. A great deal has yet to be done, both in the printing of manuscript material and in the revision of matter already in print. The magnificent pioneer work of Frederic Madden, for instance, upon the text of Layamon has not yet been followed up. Sir Israel Gollancz has recreated the poems of Cotton Nero A x, first edited by Madden, but no one, as far as I know, has worked over Layamon. A new edition of the delightful and almost unobtainable *Reliquiae Antiquae* is also long overdue.

And now for a more general word. We must read the Middle English romances and narrative poems charitably. They formed what has been called ‘the light reading’ of our ancestors, an excellent description if we interpret ‘light reading’ to mean ‘light listening.’ They belong to a world in which there were no printed books, and in which, therefore, recreative literature has to be disseminated in speech or song and gathered by the ear. The time of harvest for the quiet eye had not yet come. Now the long poem that can be successfully transmitted in speech must be simple, and even thin. How much of Sordello’s story could be told to those who had to take it in from the mouth of a speaker? If we feel inclined to reproach the mediaeval romances with being feeble, tedious and attenuated, let us remember, first, the infinity of unlettered boredom they came to mitigate, and next the necessity for offering to ‘the great variety of listeners’ nothing more than a thin, steady and easily-absorbed trickle of story. No listeners can drink in a Niagara of narrative. We of to-day must swallow these tales in large mouthfuls. We must be more charitable to them than the Host of the Tabard was to Chaucer’s delightful parody. To savour their every word is to put them to a test they were never meant to endure. We rarely dwell upon every phrase of the novels that are now the occupation of our leisure. The mediaeval romances were meant to move along briskly. They were the cinema stories of their time, and some of them would make ‘sensational screen-dramas’ even in this. People in all ages are easily amused. Englishmen of the fourteenth century liked to be told the wild adventures of their favourite heroes in reams of story; Englishmen of the twentieth like to be shown the wild

adventures of their favourite ‘artistes’ in reels of film. It is not for us to cast stones. If by some cruel mischance the dialogue and recorded ‘business’ of certain popular revues survived into a distant future, what would the thirtieth century think of the twentieth? I wish it had been possible to include more examples of these old tales. I think with special regret of the passages from *Lai le Frene*, *Flores* and *Blancheflour*, *Barlaam and Josaphat* and *The Seven Sages* that lack of space has forced me to omit.

And as we read our older literature charitably, let us also read it wisely, discriminating frankly between what is good and what is only quaint or curious. Great literature survives by its intrinsic and absolute worth. It is right to admire a poem for its absolute value; it is right to admire a poem for its historical value; but it is wrong to mistake one value for the other. We should be appreciably the poorer if we had not the poems of Cynewulf; but we must not be deluded by the charm of these ancient pieces into supposing that Cynewulf is Milton. If we fall into that delusion, we have not yet learned how to read Milton. We should be able to enjoy the stories of Layamon without supposing that his tragedy of Lear can be mentioned with Shakespeare’s or his Passing of Arthur with Tennyson’s. Let us be grateful for the merits of even the least of these our distant ancestors. To me, as I turn again the pages into which a great deal of pleasant labour has gone, the last and strongest impression that comes is a sense of something common to these long-past writers and their great successors of yesterday and to-day—the something that we know and love as England.

G. S.

THE BEGINNINGS

WIDSITH

C. H. E. L. I. 3, 34–36. The poem known as *Widsith* contains about 143 lines. It is preserved in the *Exeter Book*, a collection of English verse, ‘transcribed in the late tenth or early eleventh century,’ the gift of bishop Leofric (1050–1072) to the library of his cathedral. Widsith is the name, ‘Farfarer,’ of the supposed traveller, the wandering minstrel, who ‘tells of all the tribes among which he has sojourned, all the chieftains he has known.’ Date, 7th century. See Chambers, R. W., *Widsith, A Study in Old English Heroic Legend*.

Widsið maðolade, wordhord onleac,
se þe monna mæst mægþa ofer eorþan,
folca geondferde: oft he on flette gēþah
mynelicne maþþum. Him from Myrgingum
æþelo onwocon. He mid Ealhhilde,
fælre freoþuwebban, forman siþe
Hreðcyninges ham gesohte
eastan of Ongle, Eormanrices,
wræþes wærlogan. Ongon þa worn sprecan:
‘Fela ic monna gefrægn mægþum wealdan;
sceal þeodna gehwylc þeawum lifgan,
eorl æfter oþrum eðle rædan,
se þe his þeodenstol geþeon wile!
Þara wæs Hwala hwile selast
ond Alexandreas ealra ricost
monna cynnes ond he mæst gēþah,
þara þe ic ofer foldan gefrægen hæbbe.

Swa ic geondferde fela fremdra londa
geond ginne grund; godes ond yfles
þær ic cunnade cnosle bidæled,
freomægum feor, folgade wide.
Forþon ic mæg singan ond secgan spell,
mænan fore mengo in meoduhealle,
hu me cynegode cystum dohten...

Ond ic wæs mid Eormanrice ealle þrage,
 þær me Gotena cyning gode dohte;
 se me beag forgeaf, burgwarena fruma,
 on þam siex hund wæs smætes goldes
 gescyred sceatta scillingrime;
 þone ic Eadgilse on æht sealde,
 minum hleodryhtne, þa ic to ham bicwom
 leofum to leane, þas þe he me lond forgeaf,
 mines fæder eþel, frea Myrginga.
 ond me þa Ealhhild oþerne forgeaf,
 dryhtcwen duguþe, dohtor Eadwines.
 Hyre lof lengde geond londa fela,
 þonne ic be songe secgan sceolde,
 hwær ic under swegle selast wisse
 goldhrodene cwen giefe bryttian.
 Ðonne wit Scilling sciran reorde
 for uncrum sigedryhtne song ahofan,
 hlude bi hearpan hleoþor swinsade,
 þonne monige men modum wlonce
 wordum sprecan, þa þe wel cuþan,
 þæt hi næfre song sellan ne hyrdon.
 Ðonan ic ealne geondhwearf eþel Gotena,
 sohte ic á gesiþa þa selestan:
 þæt wæs innweorud Earmarices.

Wudgan ond Haman:
 ne wæran þæt gesiþa þa sæmestan,
 þeahþe ic hy ánihst nemnan sceolde.
 Ful oft of þam heape hwinende fleag
 giellende gar on grome þeode:
 wræccan þær weoldan wundnan golde,
 werum ond wifum, Wudga ond Hama.
 Swa ic þæt symle onfond on þære feringe,
 þæt se biþ leofast londbuendum,
 se þe him god syleð gumena rice
 to gehealdenne, þenden he her leofað.'—
 Swa scriþende gesceapum hwearfað
 gleomen gumena geond grunda fela,
 þearfe secgað, þoncword spreaþ,
 simle suð oþþe norð sumne gemetað

gydda gleawne, geofum unhneawne,
 se þe fore duguþe wile dóm áræran,
 eorlscipe æfnan, oþ þæt eal scæceð,
 leoht ond lif somod: lof se gewyrceð,
 hafað under hefonum heahfæstne dóm.

Widsith spake, unlocked his store of words, he who of all men had wandered through most tribes and peoples throughout the earth: oft in hall had he received the lovely treasure. His race sprang from the Myrgings: it was with the gracious lady Ealhhild that he first, from Angel in the East, sought the home of the Gothic king Eormanric, fell and faithless. He began then to speak many words: 'Of many men have I heard, ruling over the nations. Every chieftain must live virtuously (one lord after another, ruling his land), he who desires his throne to flourish. Of these was Hwala for a time the best, and Alexandreas most mighty of all the race of men, and flourished most of those of whom I have heard tell throughout the world....In such wise I fared through many strange lands throughout this wide earth; of good and evil there I made trial, from my race remote: afar from my kindred, I served far and wide. And so I may sing and tell my story; declare before the company in the mead-hall how men of great race were nobly liberal to me....And I was with Eormanric all the time: there the king of the Goths was bounteous unto me. Lord of cities and their folk, he gave me an armlet, in which there was reckoned of refined gold, six hundred pieces counted in shillings. This I gave into the possession of my lord and protector Eadgils, when I came home: a gift unto my beloved prince, because he, lord of the Myrgings, gave me my land, the home of my father. A second ring then Ealhhild gave unto me, noble queen of chivalry, daughter of Eadwine. Through many lands her praise extended, when I must tell in song, where under the heavens I best knew a queen adorned with gold giving forth treasure. When Scilling and I with clear voice raised the song before our noble lord (loud to the harp the words made melody) then many men cunning and great of mind said they had never heard a better song. Thence I wandered through all the land of the Goths: I ever sought the best of comrades, that was the household of Eormanric....Wudga and Hama: not the worst of comrades were they, though I am to mention them last.

Full oft from that company flew the spear, whistling and shrieking, against the hostile folk. Wudga and Hama, wanderers o'er the earth, ruled there, by wounden gold, over men and women. So have I ever found it in my journeying, that he is most beloved to the dwellers in the land, to whom God giveth dominion over men to hold it whilst he liveth here.' So are the singers of men destined to go wandering throughout many lands: they tell their need, they speak the word of thanks: south or north they ever meet with one, skilled in songs, bounteous in gifts, who desires to exalt his fame before his chieftains—to do deeds of honour: till all departeth, life and light together: he gaineth glory, and hath, under the heavens, an honour which passeth not away.

text of, and translated by, Dr R. W. CHAMBERS.

THE SEAFARER

C. H. E. L. I. 1, 38. A poem of about 124 lines, preserved in the *Exeter Book*. It has been suggested that the poem is in the form of a dialogue between an old seaman and a young man, but scholars differ concerning the distribution of the lines, and, indeed, nothing is known concerning the origin and authorship of the poem. Date, 8th century.

The Old Man—

Sooth the song that I of myself can sing,
 Telling of my travels; how in troublous days,
 Hours of hardship oft I've borne!
 With a bitter breast-care I have been abiding:
 Many seats of sorrow in my ship have known!
 Frightful was the whirl of waves, when it was my part
 Narrow watch at night to keep, on my Vessel's prow
 When it rushed the rocks along. By the rigid cold
 Fast my feet were pinched, fettered by the frost,
 By the chains of cold. Care was sighing then
 Hot my heart around; hunger rent to shreds within
 Courage in me, me sea-wearied! This the man knows not,
 He to whom it happens happiest on earth,
 How I, carked with care, in the ice-cold sea,
 Overwent the winter on my wander-ways,
 All forlorn of happiness, all bereft of loving kinsmen,
 Hung about with icicles; flew the hail in showers.

Nothing heard I there save the howling of the sea,
 And the ice-chilled billow, 'whiles the crying of the swan!
 All the glee I got me was the gannet's scream,
 And the swooshing of the seal, 'stead of mirth of men;
 'Stead of the mead-drinking, moaning of the sea-mew.
 There the storms smote on the crags, there the swallow of
 the sea

Answered to them, icy-plumed; and that answer oft the erne—
 Wet his wings were— barked aloud.

.
 Could this sorrow-laden soul None of all my kinsmen
 Little then does he believe stir to any joy.
 While he tarried in the towns, who life's pleasure owns
 Proud and insolent with wine— and but trifling balefulness,—
 Often must outstay how out-wearied I
 Sombre grew the shade of night... and it snowed from nor'rard,
 Frost the field enchain'd, fell the hail on earth,
 Coldest of all corns.

Young Man—

Wherfore now then crash together
 Thoughts my soul within that I should myself adventure
 The high streamings of the sea, and the sport of the salt
 waves!

For a passion of the mind every moment pricks me on
 All my life to set a-faring; so that far from hence,
 I may seek the shore of the strange outlanders.

Old Man—

Yes, so haughty of his heart is no hero on the earth,
 Nor so good in all his giving, nor so generous in youth,
 Nor so daring in his deeds, nor so dear unto his lord,
 That he has not always yearning unto his sea-faring,
 To whatever work his Lord may have will to make for him.
 For the harp he has no heart, nor for having of the rings,
 Nor in woman is his weal, in the world he's no delight,
 Nor in anything whatever save the tossing o'er the waves!
 O for ever he has longing who is urged towards the sea.

Young Man—

Trees rebloom with blossoms, burghs are fair again,
 Winsome are the wide plains, and the world is gay—

All doth only challenge the impassioned heart
 Of his courage to the voyage, whosoever thus bethinks him,
 O'er the ocean billows, far away to go.

Old Man—

Every cuckoo calls a warning, with his chant of sorrow!
 Sings the summer's watchman, sorrow is he boding,
 Bitter in the bosom's hoard. This the brave man wots not of,—
 Not the warrior rich in welfare— what the wanderer endures,
 Who his paths of banishment, widest places on the sea.

Young Man—

For behold, my thought hovers now above my heart;
 O'er the surging flood of sea now my spirit flies,
 O'er the homeland of the whale— hovers then afar
 O'er the foldings of the earth! Now again it flies to me
 Full of yearning, greedy! Yells that lonely flier;
 Whets upon the Whale-way irresistibly my heart,
 O'er the storming of the seas!...

translated by STOPFORD BROOKE: *Early English Literature.*

THE COMPLAINT OF DEOR

C. H. E. L. I. 4, 36, 37. An elegy of about 42 lines, preserved in the *Exeter Book*. Each verse ends with a refrain, 'a phenomenon for which it would be difficult to find a parallel in Old English poetry.' The Weland of the first strophe is the smith of medieval legend. The poem has been well described by Lawrence as a minstrel's 'Consolatio Philosophiae.'

Weland, the steadfast warrior, had experience of persecution; he suffered hardship. As boon companions he had grief and yearning, misery in the cold of winter. He fell on evil days after Nithhad had laid fetters upon him, supple bonds of sinew on a nobler man.

That was surmounted; so can this be.

On Beadohild's mind her brothers' death preyed far less sorely than her own condition, when she clearly perceived that she was with child; she could not bear to think on what must happen.

That was surmounted; so can this be.

Many of us have heard that the Geat's affection for Maethhild passed all bounds, that his hapless love completely robbed him of his sleep.

That was surmounted; so can this be.

Theodric ruled for thirty years the fortress of the Maeringas; that has become a matter of common knowledge.

That was surmounted; so can this be.

We have learned of Eormanric's ferocious disposition; he held dominion far and wide in the realm of the Goths. A cruel king was he. Many a man sat in the toils of care, anticipating trouble and continually praying for the downfall of his sovereignty.

That was surmounted; so can this be.

He who is anxious and distressed sits bereft of joy, with gloomy thoughts in his heart. Suffering, he deems, will ever be his lot. Still he can reflect that the wise Lord follows very different courses throughout the world; to many a man he gives honour and abiding prosperity, yet nought but misery to some.

Of myself I will say this much, that once I was minstrel of the Heodenings, my master's favourite. My name was Deor. For many years I had a goodly office and a generous lord, till now Hoerrenda, a skilful bard, has received the estate which the protector of warriors gave to me in days gone by.

That was surmounted; so can this be.

translated by BRUCE DICKINS: *Runic and Heroic Poems*.

THE RUIN

C. H. E. L. I. 1, 4, 39. In the *Exeter Book*. A Roman city in Britain, possibly Bath, is described, but the MS is badly damaged and much of the text is lost.

Wondrous is this masonry, shattered by the Fates. The fortifications have given way, the constructions of the giants are crumbling. The roofs have collapsed; the towers are in ruins.... There is rime on the mortar. The walls are rent and broken away and have fallen, undermined by age. Its owners and builders are perished and gone and are held fast in the earth's embrace, the ruthless clutch of the grave, while a hundred generations of mankind have passed away. Red of hue and hoary with lichen this wall has outlasted kingdom after kingdom, standing unmoved by storms. The lofty arch has fallen.... Resolute in spirit he marvellously clamped the foundations of the halls with ties. There were splendid palaces, and many halls with water flowing

through them; a wealth of gables towered aloft; loud was the clamour of the troops; many were the banqueting halls, full of the joys of life, until all was shattered by mighty Fate. The dead lay on all sides. Days of pestilence had come and death carried off the entire population.

Their defences became waste places, their fortifications crumbled; the troops who should have repaired them lay dead on the earth; and so these courts lie desolate, and the framework of the dome with its red arches sheds its tiles where of old many a warrior, joyous hearted and radiant with gold shone resplendent in his war accoutrements, proud and flushed with wine. He gazed upon the treasure, the silver, the precious stones, upon wealth, riches and pearls, upon this splendid citadel of a broad domain. There stood courts of stone, and a stream gushed forth in rippling floods of hot water. The wall enfolded within its bright bosom the whole place which contained the hot flood of the baths.

translated by NORAH KERSHAW: *Anglo-Saxon and Norse Poems.*

THE WANDERER

C. H. E. L. I. 4, 37, 38. In the *Exeter Book*. An elegy of about 115 lines, ‘depicting the sufferings of a man who has lost his lord. Alone and friendless, he travels over the sea, seeking a home where he can find protection. In sleep, visions of his former happiness come back to him. When he awakes, his heart sinks at the sight of the grey waves and the falling snow....The poem throws an interesting light on the close nature of the relationship subsisting in early times between lord and man.’

Still the lone one and desolate waits for his Maker’s ruth—
God’s good mercy, albeit so long it tarry, in sooth:
Careworn and sad of heart, on the watery ways must he
Plough with the hand-graspt oar—how long?—the rime-cold sea:
Tread thy paths of exile, O Fate, who art cruelty.

Thus did a wanderer speak, being heart-full of woe, and all
Thoughts of the cruel slayings, and pleasant comrades’ fall.

Morn by morn I, alone, am fain to utter my woe;
Now is there none of the living to whom I dare to show
Plainly the thought of my heart: in very sooth I know
Excellent is it in man that his breast he straitly bind,
Shut fast his thinkings in silence, whatever he have in his mind.

The man that is weary in heart, he never can fate withstand;
The man that grieves in his spirit, he finds not the helper's hand.
Therefore the glory-grasper full heavy of soul may be.
So, far from my fatherland, and mine own good kinsmen free,
I must bind my heart in fetters, for long, ah! long ago,
The earth's cold darkness cover'd my giver of gold brought low;
And I, sore stricken and humbled, and winter-sadden'd, went
Away o'er the frost-bound waves to seek for the dear content
Of the hall of the giver of rings; but far nor near could I find
Who felt the love of the mead-hall, or who with comforts kind
Would comfort me, the friendless. 'Tis he alone will know,
Who knows, being desolate too, how evil a fere is woe.
For him the path of the exile, and not the twisted gold;
For him the frost in his bosom, and not earth-riches old.
Oh, well he remembers the hall-men, the treasure bestow'd in
the hall;
The feast that his gold-giver made him, the joy at its highth, at
its fall:
He knows who must be forlorn for his dear lord's counsels gone
When sleep and sorrow together are binding the lonely one;
When him thinks he clasps and kisses his leader of men, and lays
His hands and head on his knee, as when, in the good yore-days,
He sat on the throne of his might, in the strength that wins and
saves—
But the friendless man awakes, and he sees the yellow waves,
And the sea-birds dip to the sea, and broaden their wings to the
gale,
And he sees the dreary rime, and the snow commingled with hail.
Oh, then are the wounds of his heart the sorer much for this,
The grief for the lov'd and lost made new by the dream of old
bliss.
His kinsmen's memory comes to him as he lies asleep,
And he greets it with joy, with joy, and the heart in his breast
doth leap;
But out of his ken the shapes of his warrior-comrades swim
To the land whence seafarers bring no dear old saws for him.
Then fresh grows sorrow and new to him whose bitter part
Is to send o'er the frost-bound waves full often his weary heart.
For this do I look around this world, and cannot see
Wherefore or why my heart should not grow dark in me,

When I think of the lives of the leaders, the clansmen mighty in mood;

When I think how sudden and swift they yielded the place where they stood.

So droops this mid-earth and falls, and never a man is found Wise ere a many winters have girt his life around.

Full patient the sage must be, and he that would counsel teach Not over-hot in his heart, nor over-swift in his speech; Nor faint of soul nor secure, nor fain for the fight, nor afraid; Nor ready to boast before he know himself well array'd.

The proud-soul'd man must bide when he utters his vaunt, until He know of the thoughts of the heart, and whitherward turn they will.

The prudent must understand how terror and awe shall be, When the glory and weal of the world lie waste, as now men see On our mid-earth, many a where, the wind-swept walls arise, And the ruin'd dwellings and void, and the rime that on them lies.

The wine-halls crumble, bereft of joy the warriors lie, The flower of the doughty fallen, the proud ones fair to the eye. War took off some in death, and one did a strong bird bear Over the deep; and one—his bones did the grey wolf share; And one was hid in a cave by a comrade sorrowful fac'd.— Oh, thus the Shaper of men hath laid the earth all waste, Till the works of the city-dwellers, the works of the giants of earth,

Stood empty and lorn of the burst of the mighty revellers' mirth. Who wisely hath mus'd on this wallstead, and ponders this dark life well,

In his heart he hath often bethought him of slayings many and fell,

And these be the words he taketh, the thoughts of his heart to tell.

Where is the horse and the rider? Where is the giver of gold? Where be the seats at the banquet? Where be the hall-joys of old?

Alas for the burnisht cup!—for the byrnied chief to-day! Alas for the strength of the prince! for the time hath past away— Is hid 'neath the shadow of night, as it never had been at all. Behind the dear and doughty there standeth now a wall,

A wall that is wondrous high, and with wondrous snake-work wrought.—

The strength of the spears hath fordone the earls and hath made them naught;

The weapons greedy of slaughter, and she, the mighty Weird; And the tempests beat on the rocks, and the storm-wind that maketh afraid;

The terrible storm that fetters the earth, the winter-bale, When the shadow of night falls wan, and wild is the rush of the hail,

The cruel rush from the north, which maketh men to quail.

Hardship-full is the earth, o'erturn'd when the stark Weirds say; Here is the passing of riches, here friends are passing away; And men and kinsfolk pass, and nothing and none may stay; And all this earth-stead here shall be empty and void one day.

translated by EMILY HICKEY:
A Sculptor and other Poems.

RUNES AND MANUSCRIPTS

VERSES FROM THE OLD ENGLISH RUNIC POEM

C. H. E. L. i. 7 ff., 62. Printed by Hickes in his *Linguarum Veterum Septentrionalium Thesaurus*, 1705, from MS Cott. Otho B x, which was burnt in 1731. There are 29 stanzas, of which seven are given below. 'Each of the letters of the runic alphabet had its own name, which was also the word for some animal, plant or other article, e.g. riches, buffalo, thorn; and it is the properties of these which the poem describes, allotting three or four lines to each.'

F. (wealth) is a comfort to all men; yet must every man bestow it freely, if he wish to gain honour in the sight of the Lord.

P. (the thorn) is exceedingly sharp, an evil thing for any knight to touch, uncommonly severe on all who sit among them.

N. (trouble) is oppressive to the heart; yet often it proves a source of help and salvation to the children of men, to everyone who heeds it betimes.

J. (summer) is a joy to men, when God, the holy King of Heaven, suffers the earth to bring forth shining fruits for rich and poor alike.

S. (the sun) is ever a joy to seafarers (or, in the hopes of seafarers) when they journey away over the fishes' bath, until the courser of the deep bears them to land.

E. (the horse) is a joy to princes in the presence of warriors, a steed in the pride of its hoofs, when rich men on horseback bandy words about it; and it is ever a source of comfort to the restless.

A. (the oak) fattens the flesh (of swine) for the children of men. Often it traverses the gannet's bath, and the ocean proves whether the oak keeps faith in honourable fashion.

translated by BRUCE DICKINS: *Runic and Heroic Poems*.

RUNIC LETTERS

(a) The A.S. Runic Poem.

(b) Salzburg Codex.

F. U. Þ. N. R. h. X. P: H H. T. I. Ð. S Z. h. Ý. Ȑ.
 F. U. Þ. N. R. h. X. P: H T. I. Ð. S . N. Ý. Ȑ.
 f . u . þ . o . r . c . z . w : h . n . i . j . i . h . p . z . s .

T. B. M. M. l. Þ. Þ. N: N. F. A. * . T. [W. h. M. Þ. Þ]
 T. B. M. M. l. Þ. Þ. N: N. F. A. T.
 t . b . e . m . l . n g . æ . d : a . æ . y . i o . e a . [q . (c) . s t . g .]

'Runes went out of use during the ninth and tenth centuries. Their place had, however, been usurped long before that period by the Roman alphabet, which the English received from the early Irish missionaries. The advent of Christianity and the beginnings of English literature are intimately connected, for the missionary and the Roman alphabet travelled together, and it was owing to the Christian scribe that the songs and sagas, the laws and customs, the faith and the proverbial wisdom of our forefathers, were first recorded and preserved....An earlier attempt had been made to introduce Roman characters among the English. This was due to the efforts of Augustine and his missionaries, who established a school of handwriting in the south of England, with Canterbury as a probable centre....The Irish alphabet was founded on the Roman half-uncial hand, manuscripts of this type having been brought over to Ireland by missionaries, perhaps during the fifth century....In the seventh century Northumbria was Christianised by Irish missionaries, who founded monasteries and religious settlements throughout the north....Thus it came to pass that the English of the north learnt the exquisite penmanship of the Irish....After the Conquest the native hand gradually disappeared, the only traces of it left being the adoption by the foreign alphabets of the symbols *p*, *ȝ*, *þ* (*ð*) to express the peculiarly English sounds for which they stood. The rune *p*, however, fell into disuse about the beginning of the fourteenth century, its place having been taken by *uu* (*vv*) or *w*; while *ð* (*th*) occurs occasionally as late as the end of the same century. Of far superior vitality were *þ* and *ȝ*, the former bearing a charmed life throughout Middle English times, though, in the fifteenth century and later, *þ* often appeared in the degenerated form of *y*, while *ȝ* was retained in order to represent spirant sounds, afterwards denoted by *y* or *gh*.' (C. H. E. L. I. 12-15.)

EARLY NATIONAL POETRY

BEOWULF

G. H. E. L. I. 20 ff. The early national epic *Beowulf*, a poem of 3183 lines, is preserved in a tenth century MS in the British Museum (Cott. Vitell. A xv). 'Most of the historical events mentioned in *Beowulf* are to be dated within about the first three decades of the sixth century.' See *Beowulf, An Introduction to the Study of the Poem, with a discussion of the stories of Offa and Finn*, by Dr R. W. Chambers, Cambridge, 1921; and *Beowulf with the Finnsburg Fragment*, edited by A. J. Wyatt and R. W. Chambers, Cambridge, 1920.

(a) THE SEA-BURIAL OF SCYLD

Oft Scyld the Sheafson, when the hosts were thronging,
Fell upon many a folk and left them houseless.
Ah! but they came to fear him when, after his finding,
All lonely and lacking, he lived to have solace,
To wax in the ways of the world and win him worship,
Until it befell that all folk whatsoever,
That beset the whale's way, bowed to his bidding,
And his guerdon gave him. Yea, he was good for us!

And by him it befell that a son was begotten.
Thither the Great God sent an heir to his house,
To lighten the hearts that long had grown too heavy
Of the load that lay on them for lack of a King.
For now to the Lord of Life, the Heavenly Ruler,
One was beholding for honour on the earth.
Blessèd was Beowulf, and wide went blowing
The fame of Scyld's son through the Scandian lands.
Herein ye shall know of the yoke of a young man:
He must freely give in the house of his fathers,
And be able to earn that, when eld approacheth
And war draweth nigh, well willing comrades
Come, and helpers at hand; for in every homeland
By such deeds of grace shall a young man grow.

næfne he raf-waſſa pōr
 odēi hone onzeip̄ dāgū ȝiendel
 fold buende no hie fæder cū non
 him amz pas epi acenned dyſumpa ſat̄
 hie dyſel lond pumead pulf hleofu
 mæſſas fƿæne fen ge lad dāp̄ fyrtēn
 ſcietam undeip̄ naſſa ſempu n̄hepi ſeſſ
 flod undeip̄ foldan niſ ſƿeori heo non miſ
 meaſces ſſe inque ſtandēd oſeip̄ haen ho
 ſiad hundē beari pas ydu fyrtū ſaſte
 pat̄er oſeip̄ helmas h̄ep̄ mæz miltia ſehæm
 m̄d ym̄don ſeon fyri on flode no hies fiod
 leofad ſume na beaſna ſhone ſyndre
 deah he hæd ſtapa hundū gespenced. heorar
 hoſi m̄ tƿunn holt ydu ſee peorjan ſe
 flymed æphie peorh ſeled aldor on oſeip̄
 he in pille. hæfelam iuſ ſheorui ſcops honan
 ydze blond up astized. þon to pole nūn þon
 ynd ſtƿieb̄ lad ge yðjan of ſlyft dyſum
 iuðeras neorad niſ ſeƿed ſelang eft æt

Full of days at length, when the hour overtook him,
 Scyld wended his way to the shelter of God.
 And to the sea-girt shore the men of his own choosing
 Even as himself had bade them bore him down.
 The while that his words were of worth, yea, and were winsome,
 He had ruled them long beloved of his land.
 Out in the harbour was standing the well-wrought vessel,
 Gleaming fair as ice, and fain to ferry the hero.
 There then they laid him, the lord of their loving,
 Their only begetter of good within the ship's bosom.
 By the mast he lay and a many of jewels
 Of fair things and fretted from far ways brought over
 Was heaped at his hand. And I heard not of any
 That folk ever furnished a vessel more fairly
 With the weapons of war, with the weeds of the battle,
 With bills and with byrnies. And there lay on his bosom
 Many a jewel that with him must journey,
 Must float on the flood and be faring for ever.
 For not with less gifts nor with less folk giving
 Was he furnished forth than when of old, aforetime,
 In the beginning others had sent him outward
 Over the waves alone and he but a baby.
 So now high over head they unfolded above him
 A gold fashioned flag, then let the flood have him;
 Seaward thus consigning him in sadness of soul.
 Ah! but they mourned him and what man is able
 What head of our halls or what hero under heaven
 Of a truth to tell who took up that lading?

translated by A. BLYTH WEBSTER:
Essays and Studies, Vol. v.

BEOWULF

(b) THE HAUNT OF GRENDEL AND HIS DAM

I have heard the people dwelling in my land, hall-rulers, say that they had often seen two such mighty stalkers of the marches, spirits of otherwhere, haunting the moors. One of them, as they could know full well, was like unto a woman; the other mis-

created being, in the image of man—save that he was larger than any man—wandered in exile, and him in olden time the people named Grendel. They know not if ever he had a father among the spirits of darkness. They dwell in a hidden land amid wolf-haunted slopes and savage fen-paths, nigh the wind-swept cliffs where the mountain-stream falleth, shrouded in the mists of the headlands, its flood flowing underground. It is not far thence in measurement of miles that the mere lieth. Over it hang groves in hoary whiteness; a forest with fixed roots bendeth over the waters. There in the night-tide is a dread wonder seen—a fire on the flood! There is none of the children of men so wise that he knoweth the depths thereof. Although hard pressed by hounds, the heath-ranging stag, with mighty horns, may seek out that forest, driven from afar, yet sooner will he yield up life and breath upon the bank than hide his head within its waters. Cheerless is the place. Thence the surge riseth wan to the clouds, when the winds stir up foul weather till the air thicken and the heavens weep.

Now once again help rests with thee alone. Thou knowest not yet the spot, the savage place where thou mayst find the sinful creature.

translated by CHAUNCEY B. TINKER: *Select Translations from Old English Poetry* (Cook and Tinker).

BEOWULF

(c) THE JOURNEY TO THE MERE

The careful prince
Went worthily;
Warriors marched also
Shining with shields.
Then there were shown
Tracks of the troubler,
Telling plainly
Her way through the waste,—
As they went forward
On the murky moor,—
With the murdered thane

Of Hrothgar's heroes,
Home defenders,
Best and bravest
Brought to his end.
Then they threaded,
Athelings' sons,
Steep, stony gorges,
A strait road,
Weird, narrow way,
Wastes unknown,
Naked, high nesses,
Nicker houses many.
Before all Beowulf
And some of the bravest
Went on the way,
Wise men,
To explore the plain,
Till, planted leaning
Over the rough rock,
He reached suddenly
An unwinsome wood.
Water stood under it
Ghastly with gore;
It was grief for all Danes,
A sight of sorrow
For the Scylding's friends,
A horror for heroes,
When the head of Æschere
Was found by the steep flood
Floated ashore.
The water welled blood,
The warriors gazed
On the hot heart's blood,
While the horn sang
A doleful death-note.

translated by HENRY MORLEY 'into a measure that repeats the form of the original': *English Writers*, Vol. I.

BEOWULF

(d) BEOWULF'S FUNERAL PYRE

Then the Geatish people fashioned for him a mighty pile upon the ground, all hung with helms and war-shields and bright byrnies, even as he had entreated them; and in the midst of it the sorrowing men laid their great king, their beloved lord. Then the warriors began to kindle the greatest of funeral fires upon the mound. Uprose the wood-smoke, black above the flame; blazing fire roared, mingled with a sound of weeping when the tumult of the wind was stilled, until, hot within the breast, it had consumed the bony frame. Sad at heart, with care-laden soul, they mourned the fall of their lord....Heaven swallowed up the smoke.

Then the Weder people made a mound upon the cliff, high and broad, to be seen afar of seafaring men; and ten days they built it, the war-hero's beacon. They made a wall round about the ashes of the fire, even as the wisest of men could most worthily devise. Within the mound they put the rings and the jewels, all the adornments which the brave-hearted men had taken from the hoard; they let the earth hold the treasure of heroes, hid the gold in the ground, where it still remains, as useless unto men as it was of yore.

Then warriors, sons of princes, twelve in all, rode about the mound; they had in mind to bewail their sorrow, mourn their king, utter the dirge, and speak of their hero; they praised his courage, and greatly commended his mighty deeds. Thus it is fitting that a man should praise his lord in words and cherish him in heart when he must forth from the fleeting body.

So the Geatish people, companions of his hearth, mourned the fall of their lord; said that he was a mighty king, the mildest and kindest of men, most gracious to his people and most desirous of praise.

translated by CHAUNCEY B. TINKER: *Select Translations from Old English Poetry* (Cook and Tinker).

BEOWULF

(e) THE FINN EPISODE

Through the treachery of the Eotenas, quarrel arises between Finn, king of the Frisians, and Hnæf the Dane, brother of Finn's wife, Hildeburh.

At the hands of the henchmen of Finn—when the sudden assault fell on them—was the hero of the Half-Danes, Hnæf of the Scyldings, doomed to fall in the Frisian battle. Verily, Hildeburh had no cause to praise the good-faith of the Eotenas—childless, brotherless, albeit without fault, she was deprived at the sword play of those she loved. They fell as fate ordained, wounded by the spear, and a sad lady was she. Not without cause did the daughter of Hoc cry out upon fate, when morning came, and under the clear sky she could see the carnage of her kinsfolk.

After the fall of Hnæf, his men are led by his thane Hengest.

In the place where of old he had the greatest joy in the world, were swept away all the thanes of Finn, save some few, so that he could not maintain battle against Hengest in the place of debate, nor snatch from the king's thane by warfare those who had escaped the slaughter.

Peace is made between Frisians and Danes: the terms.

But they [the Frisians] offered terms [to the Danes]: that they would give them place in another mansion,—a hall and a high-seat; that they should share equally with the children of the Eotenas; and that every day the son of Folcwalda [Finn] should honour the Danes, the company of Hengest, with rings and with treasures of wrought gold, in like manner as he would encourage the Frisian folk in the festive hall. On both sides they plighted a peace fast and firm. Finn engaged with oaths to Hengest, firmly and inviolably, that he would preserve safe, as his wise men should direct, those who had escaped the slaughter; no man by words or works should break the peace, nor should they [the Frisians] ever make mention of it, although the Danes were following their own lord's slayer, being without a prince, since

need constrained them; if then any of the Frisians with bitter speech should call the feud to mind, then the edge of the sword should atone it.

*The dead are burnt. The brother and son of Hildeburh
are placed on the same pyre.*

The oath was sworn, and massive gold was lifted from the hoard. The best warrior of the War-Scyldings [Hnæf] was ready for the bale-fire: at the pyre it was plain to see the blood-stained corselet, the boar-image all golden and iron-hard, many a prince done to death by wounds—for not a few had fallen. Hildeburh gave command that, at the pyre of Hnæf, her son should be committed to the flames, his body placed upon the bale-fire and burnt by his uncle's side¹. The lady mourned, uttering her lament: the warrior was lifted on the pyre. The greatest of funeral fires curled to the heavens, roaring in front of the burial mound: heads wasted away, wounds burst open, blood sprang from the cruel gash in the body. The flame, most greedy of spirits, swallowed all whom war there had carried off, of the folk of both parties—their glory was past.

The survivors dwell through the winter with Finn in Friesland.

Then the warriors departed to visit their abodes, deprived of their friends, to see Friesland, their homes and their goodly seat. Through that cruel winter did Hengest stay with Finn, and departed not; he thought of his land, though he could not drive his ring-prowed ship upon the sea; the ocean tossed with the storm, and strove against the wind; winter locked the waves with its bond of ice, till another year came to the dwellings of men, even as it yet does—the gloriously bright seasons that ever keep their time.

Spring comes: Hengest meditates revenge.

Then was winter gone, and fair was the face of the earth: the wanderer [Hengest] prepared to go, the stranger from the land; he thought more of revenge than of his sea journey, if he could bring to pass that angry encounter in which he would show his remembrance of the children of the Eotenas.

¹ Reading *ēame on eaxle*.

Revenge is planned by the son of Hunlaf, Hengest consenting.

So he refused not the way of the world, when the son of Hunlaf placed in his bosom ‘the light of war,’ that best of blades—well known were its edges among the Eotenas.

Guthlaf and Oslaf attack Finn in his hall.

In like manner did dire sword-bale later befall the valiant Finn at his own home, when Guthlaf and Oslaf, after the sea journey, made complaint of the grim attack, of their woe, blamed him for their manifold sorrows: nor could the moving spirit be kept within the breast.

Finn is slain, and Hildeburh carried back to her people.

Then was the hall reddened with the life blood of the foes, and Finn likewise slain, the king in the midst of his company, and the queen taken. The bowmen of the Scyldings carried to the ships all the wealth of the mighty king: all that they in Finn’s town could find of jewels and well-wrought gems. They carried the noble lady on the sea-path to the Danes, led her to her people.

translated for the present work by Dr R. W. CHAMBERS.

THE FINN FRAGMENT

C. H. E. L. I. 30, 31. Printed, in 1705, by Dr George Hickes, in his *Linguarum Veterum Septentrionalium Thesaurus*, from a MS in Lambeth Palace Library, since lost. The beginning and end are wanting. The story of Finn is the subject of the *Beowulf* episode printed above.

... Then cried the king young in war, ‘It is not dawn that glows in the east. There is no dragon flying here, nor are the gables of this hall a flame. But here they are hurrying forth. The birds are singing, the grey-coat is howling, the war-wood is clangling, shield echoing when smitten by the shaft. Now shines the moon through rifts in the clouds; now fearful deeds are afoot that will bring on a pitched battle here. But wake ye now, my warriors, don your corselets, think on your prowess, dash to the van, be of good courage.’

Then up rose many a knight bedecked with gold and buckled his sword about him. The lordly champions strode to the door;

Sigeferth and Eaha drew their swords, and to the other door went Ordla¹ and Guthlaf, and Hengest himself followed in their wake.

Meanwhile Guthhere was urging Garulf that he, whose life was so precious, should not bear his armour to the door of the hall at the first onset now that a fierce warrior was bent on spoliation. But he like a gallant hero demanded loudly above all the din of battle who it was that held the door. ‘Sigeferth is my name,’ said he. ‘I am prince of the Secgan, known as a rover far and wide. Many a hardship, many a fierce battle have I endured. Yet to thee is either lot assured that thou wilt seek at my hands.’

Then there was the crash of deadly blows within the hall; the beaked shield in the heroes’ hand must needs shatter the horned helm. The castle floor reechoed, till in the fray fell Garulf, son of Guthlaf, first of dwellers upon earth, and many a gallant warrior about him; The raven hovered dismal with its dusky plumage; the gleam of swords flashed forth as though all Finn’s castle were afame.

Never have I heard of sixty warriors flushed with victory who bore themselves more gallantly nor more honourably in mortal conflict, nor squires who paid a better recompense for shining mead than did his retinue to Hnaef. Five days they fought in such a wise that no man fell out of that knightly band; but still they held the door.

Then departed a wounded hero limping from the fray; he said that his mailcoat, armour of proof, was shattered and pierced likewise was his helm. Him straightway asked the keeper of the host how those warriors survived their wounds, or which of the heroes....

translated by BRUCE DICKINS: *Runic and Heroic Poems.*

¹ Called Oslaf in the *Beowulf* episode.

OLD ENGLISH CHRISTIAN POETRY

BEDE'S ACCOUNT OF CAEDMON

C. H. E. L. i. 43 ff., 79 ff. The following passage and the text of the hymn preserved in the Cambridge University Library MS of Bede represent our knowledge of Caedmon. The hymn is probably 'the first piece of extant English literature composed on English soil' (Cook).

In the monastery of this abbess there was a brother specially remarkable and distinguished by the divine grace. For he was wont to compose suitable songs, tending to religion and piety, so that whatever he had learnt through scholars of the divine writings, he presently embellished in poetic compositions of the greatest sweetness and fervour, well expressed in the English language. And by his songs many men's minds were often fired to disregard the world and attach themselves to the heavenly life. And also many others after him in England began to compose pious songs: none however could do that like him. For he had not been taught of men or through man to acquire the art of song, but he had divine aid and received the art of song through God's grace. And for this reason he never could compose anything frivolous, nor any idle poetry, but just that only which tended to piety, and which it became his pious tongue to sing. The man had lived in the world till the time that he was of advanced age, and never had learnt any poetry. And as he was often at a beer drinking, when it was arranged, to promote mirth, that they should all in turn sing to the harp, whenever he saw the harp come near him, he arose out of shame from the feast and went home to his house. Having done so on one occasion, he left the house of entertainment, and went out to the fold of the cattle, the charge of which had been committed to him for that night. When in due time he stretched his limbs on the bed there and fell asleep, there stood by him in a dream a man, who saluted and greeted him, calling on him by name: 'Caedmon, sing me something.' Then he answered and said: 'I cannot sing

anything; and therefore I came out from this entertainment and retired here, as I know not how to sing.' Again he who spoke to him said: 'Yet you could sing.' Then said he: 'What shall I sing?' He said: 'Sing to me the beginning of all things.' On receiving this answer, he at once began to sing, in praise of God the Creator, verses and words which he had never heard, the order of which is as follows: 'Now should we praise the guardian of the heavenly kingdom, the power of the Creator and the counsel of his mind, the works of the Father of glory, how he, the eternal Lord, originated every marvel. He the holy Creator first created the heaven, as a roof for the children of the earth; then the eternal Lord, guardian of the human race, the Almighty ruler, afterwards fashioned the world as a soil for men.' Then he arose from his sleep, and he had firmly in his memory all that he sang while asleep. And to these words he soon added on many others in the same style of song worthy of God. Then he came in the morning to the steward of the manor, who was his superior: and told him what gift he had received; and he at once brought him to the abbess and made the matter known to her. Then she ordered all the best scholars and the students to be assembled: and in their presence bade him relate the dream, and sing the song, that by the judgment of all it might be determined, what or whence this gift was. Then it seemed to all, as indeed it was, that a heavenly grace had been vouchsafed him by the Lord himself. Then they set forth and stated to him a holy narrative and some word of divine doctrine, and directed him, if he could, to turn it into the harmony of verse. Having undertaken the task, he went home to his house; and, returning in the morning, recited and presented to them what had been delivered to him, composed in excellent verse. Then the abbess began to welcome and find a pleasure in God's grace in the man; and she admonished and enjoined him to leave the world and become a monk: and he readily assented. And she admitted him with his property into the monastery, and attached him to the congregation of God's servants; and she directed, that he should be taught the whole round of sacred history and narrative. And he retained in his memory, whatever he learnt by hearing: and, like a clean animal, he ruminated and converted all into the sweetest music. And his song and his music were so delightful to hear, that even his teachers wrote down the words from his lips and learnt them.

He sang first of the earth's creation and the beginning of man and all the story of Genesis, which is the first book of Moses; and afterwards about the departure of the people of Israel from the land of Egypt and their entry into the land of promise; and about many other narratives in the books of the canon of Scripture; and about Christ's incarnation; and about his passion; and about his ascension into heaven; and about the coming of the Holy Ghost, and the teaching of the apostles: and again about the day of judgment to come, and about the terror of hell torment, and about the sweetness of the kingdom of heaven, he composed many a song. And he also composed many others about the divine blessings and judgments. In all these he earnestly strove to draw men from the love of sin and transgression, and to rouse them to love and zeal for good deeds. For the man was very pious and humbly submissive to regular discipline. And towards those who would act otherwise, he was inflamed with a zeal of great fervour. And he accordingly concluded and ended his life by a fair close. For when it grew near the time of his departure and decease, fourteen days previously he was oppressed and afflicted with bodily infirmity, yet to such a moderate extent, that he could all the time speak and move about. There was there close at hand a house for the sick, into which it was their custom to bring those who were more infirm, and those who were at the point of death, and tend them there together. Then he directed his attendant on the evening of the night on which he was to depart from the world, to prepare a place for him in the house, that he might rest. Then the attendant wondered, why he asked this, for it seemed to him his death was not so near: however he did as he said and directed. And when he went to bed there, and cheerfully spoke and jested along with those in the house, then after midnight he asked them, whether they had the Eucharist in the house. Then they answered and said: 'What need have you of the Eucharist? It is not so near your death, seeing that you are speaking so cheerfully and brightly to us.' He repeated: 'Bring me the Eucharist.' When he had it in his hand, he asked whether they all felt peaceably and cheerfully disposed towards him, without any rancour. Then all answered, and said they had no rancorous feeling towards him, but all were most friendly disposed to him: and they in turn prayed him to feel kindly to them. Then he answered and said: 'Dear brethren,

I feel very friendly towards you and all God's servants.' And so he fortified himself with the heavenly viaticum, and prepared his entry into another life. Then once more he asked, how near it was to the hour that the brothers should get up, and raise the song of praise to God and chaunt lauds. Then they answered: 'It is not far to that.' He said: 'Good: let us indeed await the hour.' And he prayed and signed himself with the token of God's cross, and laid down his head on the pillow and fell asleep for awhile; and so in quiet ended his life. And so it came to pass, that as with pure and simple heart and with tranquil devotion he served the Lord, so he also by a tranquil death left the earth, and appeared before God's face. And the tongue, which composed so many saving words in praise of the Creator, concluded its last words to his glory, as he crossed himself and commended his spirit into his hands. We see also that he was conscious of his own decease, from what we have just now heard related.

translated by Dr THOMAS MILLER: *The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History* (Early English Text Society, 95, 96).

CAEDMON'S HYMN

Now must we hymn the Master of heaven,
 The might of the Maker, the deeds of the Father,
 The thought of His heart. He, Lord everlasting,
 Established of old the source of all wonders:
 Creator all-holy, He hung the bright heaven,
 A roof high upreared, o'er the children of men;
 The King of mankind then created for mortals
 The world in its beauty, the earth spread beneath them,
 He, Lord everlasting, omnipotent God.

translated by ALBERT S. COOK: *Select Translations from Old English Poetry* (Cook and Tinker).

GENESIS A: THE ARK AND THE DOVE

C. H. E. L. I. 46–48. ‘The most important of the religious poems at one time attributed to Caedmon are *Genesis*, *Exodus* and *Daniel*.’ Of these, *Genesis*, a poem of nearly 3000 lines, is the most interesting. After singing the praise of the Creator (in the alleged Caedmonian manner) and describing the fall of the angels, it proceeds with the Bible story from the Creation to the frustrated sacrifice of Isaac. At line 235, however, there begins a repetition of the story of the rebel angels told in a style unlike that of the rest. No one had questioned the unity of the poem till 1875, when Sievers conjectured that ll. 235–851 were (a) an interpolation, and (b) a translation of an Old Saxon paraphrase of the Old Testament (long lost), by the author of the Old Saxon paraphrase of the New Testament, commonly known as the *Heliand*. In 1894 the discovery in the Vatican Library of a manuscript containing fragments of the Old Saxon original (ninth century) confirmed Sievers’s conjecture. See A. S. Cook, *Translations from Old English Poetry*, App. iv, for a citation of twenty-six lines that correspond. The main body of the poem is now generally known as *Genesis A* and the interpolation as *Genesis B*. The MS (Bodl. Junius xi) was discovered by Ussher and first printed under the care of Francis Junius, a friend of Milton, at Amsterdam in 1655.

The floods receded, and those sea-tossed men, together with their wives, longed for the hour when they might leave their narrow home, and step across the well-nailed sides upon the shore, and from their prison lead out their possessions. And Noah, the helmsman of the ark, made trial whether the sea-floods yet were ebbing under heaven. After many days, while the high hills yet harboured the seed and treasure of the tribes of earth, the son of Lamech let a dusky raven fly forth from the ark over the deep flood. And Noah was sure that in its need, if so be it should find no land upon this journey, the raven would return to him again within the ark across the wide water. But Noah’s hope failed him! Exulting the raven perched upon the floating bodies of the dead; the black-winged bird would not return.

And seven days after the dusky raven he let a grey dove fly forth from the ark across the deep water, making trial whether the high and foaming floods had yet receded from any region of the green earth. Widely she sought her heart’s desire, circling afar, but nowhere finding rest. Because of the floods she might not set foot upon the land, nor settle on the branch of any tree because of the ocean-streams. The high hills were covered by the deep. And so at evening over the dusky wave the wild bird

sought the ark, settling hungry and weary into the hands of that holy man.

And again after seven days a second dove was sent forth from the ark. The wild bird circled widely till she found a refuge and a pleasant resting-place, and settled in a tree. Blithe of heart, she rejoiced that in her weariness she might find rest upon its pleasant branches. She shook her feathers and flew back with a gift, bearing as she flew a branch of an olive tree with its green blades. And the prince of shipmen knew that comfort was at hand, and a requital of their toilsome voyage.

And again after seven days the blessed man sent forth a third wild dove. And she flew not back unto the ark, but came to land and the green forests. Her heart was glad; never again would she appear under the black roof of the ark. Nor was there need! Then our Lord, the Warden of the heavenly kingdom, with holy word spake unto Noah:

'For thee again on earth a fair abiding-place is founded, blessings upon the land, and rest from far sea-wandering. Depart in peace out of the ark; go forth upon the bosom of the earth. And from the high ship lead thy household, and all the living things which graciously I shielded against the flood, so long as the sea held sway and covered thy third home.'

translated by CHARLES W. KENNEDY: *The Caedmon Poems.*

GENESIS B: SATAN AND THE REBEL ANGELS

The Holy Lord, All-wielding God, with mighty hand had wrought ten angel-orders in whom He trusted well, that they would do Him service, and work His will. Therefore God gave them reason, with His own hands shaped them, and stablished them in bliss. But one He made so great and strong of heart, He let him wield such power in heaven next unto God, so radiant-hued He wrought him, so fair his form in heaven which God had given, that he was like unto the shining stars. He should have sung his Maker's praise, and prized his bliss in heaven. He should have thanked his Lord for the great boon He showered on him in the heavenly light, and let him long enjoy. But he

turned him to a worse thing, and strove to stir up strife against the Highest Lord of heaven, who sitteth on the throne of glory.

Dear was he to our Lord. Nor could it long be hid from God that pride was growing in His angel's heart. He set himself against his Leader, scoffed at God with boasting, and would not serve Him. He said his form was beautiful and bright, gleaming and fair of hue. Nor could he find it in his heart to serve the Lord God, or be subject to Him. It seemed to him that he had greater strength and larger following than Holy God might have. Many words the angel spake in his presumption. By his own power alone he thought to build a stronger throne and mightier in heaven. He said his heart was urging him to toil, to build a stately palace in the north and west. He said he doubted in his heart if he would still be subject unto God:

'Why should I slave?' quoth he. 'I need not serve a master. My hands are strong to work full many a wonder. Power enough have I to rear a goodlier throne, a higher in the heavens. Why should I fawn for His favour, or yield Him such submission? I may be God as well as He! Brave comrades stand about me; stout-hearted heroes who will not fail me in the fray. These valiant souls have chosen me their lord. With such peers one may ponder counsel, and gain a following. Devoted are these friends and faithful-hearted; and I may be their lord and rule this realm. It seemeth no wise right to me that I should cringe a whit to God for any good. I will not serve Him longer.'

Now when God had heard all this, how His angel was beginning to make presumptuous head against his Leader, speaking rash words of insolence against his Lord, needs must he make atonement for that deed, endure the woe of strife, and bear his punishment, most grievous of all deaths. And so doth every man who wickedly thinketh to strive with God, the Lord of might.

Then Almighty God, High Lord of heaven, was filled with wrath, and hurled him from his lofty throne. He had gained his Master's hate, and lost His favour. God's heart was hardened against him. Wherefore he needs must sink into the pit of torment because he strove against the Lord of heaven. He banished him from grace and cast him into hell, into the deep abyss where he became a devil. The Fiend and all his followers fell from heaven; three nights and days the angels fell from heaven into hell. God changed them all to devils. Because they

heeded not His deed and word, therefore Almighty God hurled them into darkness, deep under earth, crushed them and set them in the mirk of hell. There through the never-ending watches of the night the fiends endure an unremitting fire. Then at the dawn cometh an east wind, and bitter frost, ever a blast of fire or storm of frost. And each must have his share of suffering wrought for his punishment. Their world was changed when God filled full the pit of hell with His foes!

But the angels who kept their faith with God dwelt in the heights of heaven. The other fiends who waged so fierce a war with God lay wrapped in flames. They suffer torment, hot and surging flame in the midst of hell, broad-stretching blaze of fire and bitter smoke, darkness and gloom, because they broke allegiance unto God. Their folly and the angel's pride deceived them. They would not heed the word of God. Great was their punishment! They fell, through folly and through pride, to fiery depths of flame in hell. They sought another home devoid of light and filled with fire—a mighty flaming death. The fiends perceived that through the might of God, because of their presumptuous hearts and boundless insolence, they had won a measureless woe.

Then spake their haughty king, who formerly was fairest of the angels, most radiant in heaven, beloved of his Leader and dear unto his Lord, until they turned to folly, and Almighty God was moved to anger at their wantonness, and hurled him down to depths of torment on that bed of death. He named him with a name, and said their leader should be called from thenceforth Satan. He bade him rule the black abyss of hell in place of striving against God. Satan spake—who now must needs have charge of hell and dwell in the abyss—in bitterness he spake who once had been God's angel, radiant-hued in heaven, until his pride and boundless arrogance betrayed him, so that he would not do the bidding of the Lord of hosts. Bitterness was welling in his heart; and round him blazed his cruel torment. These words he spake:

‘This narrow place is little like those other realms we knew, on high in heaven, allotted by my Lord, though the Almighty hath not granted us to hold our state, or rule our kingdom. He hath done us wrong to hurl us to the fiery depths of hell, and strip us of our heavenly realm. He hath ordained that human

kind shall settle there. That is my greatest grief that Adam—wrought of earth—should hold my firm-set throne and live in joy, while we endure this bitter woe in hell.

‘Alas! could I but use my hands and have my freedom for an hour, one winter hour, then with this host I would—— But bands of iron crush me down, the bondage of my chains is heavy. I am stripped of my dominion. Firmly are hell’s fetters forged upon me. Above me and below a blaze of fire! Never have I seen a realm more fatal—flame unassuaged that surges over hell. Ensnaring links and heavy shackles hold me. My ways are trammeled up; my feet are bound; my hands are fastened. Closed are the doors of hell, the way cut off. I may not escape out of my bonds, but mighty gyves of tempered iron, hammered hot, press hard upon me. God hath set His foot upon my neck. So I know the Lord of hosts hath read the purpose of my heart, and knew full well that strife would grow between our host and Adam over the heavenly realm, had I the freedom of my hands.

‘But now we suffer throes of hell, fire and darkness, bottomless and grim. God hath thrust us out into the black mists. He cannot charge upon us any sin or evil wrought against Him in His realm! Yet hath He robbed us of the light and cast us into utter woe. Nor may we take revenge, nor do Him any evil because He stripped us of the light. He hath marked out the borders of the world, and there created man in His own image, with whom He hopes again to people heaven, with pure souls. We needs must ponder earnestly to wreak this grudge on Adam, if we may, and on his children, and thwart His will if so we may devise.

‘No longer have I any hope of light wherein He thinketh long to joy, in bliss among His angel hosts; nor may we ever bring this thing to pass, that we should change the purpose of Almighty God. Let us therefore turn the heavenly kingdom from the sons of men, since we may not possess it, cause them to lose His favour and turn aside from the command He laid upon them. Then shall His wrath be kindled, and He shall cast them out from grace. They shall seek out hell and its grim gulf, and in this heavy bondage we may have the sons of men to serve us.

‘Begin now and plan this enterprise. If ever in olden days, when happily we dwelt in that good kingdom, and held possession of our thrones, I dealt out princely treasure to any thane, he

could not make requital for my gifts at any better time than now, if some one of my thanes would be my helper, escaping outward through these bolted gates, with strength to wing his way on high where, new-created, Adam and Eve, surrounded with abundance, dwell on earth—and we are cast out hither in this deep abyss. They are now much dearer unto God, and own the high estate and rightful realm which we should have in heaven! Good fortune is allotted to mankind.

‘My soul is sorrowful within me, my heart is sore, that they should hold the heavenly realm for ever. But if in any wise some one of you could bring them to forsake God’s word and teaching, soon would they be less pleasing unto Him! If they break His commandment, then will His wrath be kindled. Their high estate shall vanish; their sin shall have requital, and some grim penalty. Take thought now how ye may ensnare them. I shall rest softly in these chains if they lose heaven. Whoso shall bring this thing to pass shall have reward for ever, of all that we may win to our advantage, amid these flames. I will let him sit next me, whoever shall return to hell proclaiming that they have set at naught, by word and deed, the counsels of the King of heaven and been displeasing to the Lord¹.

Then God’s enemy began to make him ready, equipped in war-gear, with a wily heart. He set his helm of darkness on his head, bound it full hard, and fastened it with clasps. Many a crafty speech he knew, many a crooked word. Upward he beat his way and darted through the doors of hell. He had a ruthless heart. Evil of purpose he circled in the air, cleaving the flame with fiendish craft. He would fain ensnare God’s servants unto sin, seduce them and deceive them that they might be displeasing to the Lord. With fiendish craft he took his way until he came on Adam upon earth, the finished handiwork of God, full wisely wrought, and his wife beside him, loveliest of women, performing many a goodly service since the Lord of men appointed them His ministers.

translated by CHARLES W. KENNEDY: *The Caedmon Poems.*

¹ Grein: *lare forleton and wurdon lað gode.*

EXODUS: THE EGYPTIANS IN THE RED SEA

Then all that folk was smitten with terror; fear of the flood fell on their wretched hearts. The great sea threatened death. The sloping hills were soaked with blood; the sea spewed gore. In the deep was uproar, the waves were filled with weapons; a death-mist rose. The Egyptians turned and fled away in fear, perceiving their peril. They were shaken with horror and fain to reach their homes. Their boasting was humbled. The dreadful rushing sea swept over them. Nor did any of that army come ever again to their homes, but Fate cut off retreat and locked them in the sea.

Where before lay open roads the ocean raged. The host was overwhelmed. The seas flowed forth; an uproar rose to heaven, a moan of mighty legions. There rose a great cry of the doomed, and over them the air grew dark. Blood dyed the deep. The walls of water were shattered; the greatest of sea-deaths lashed the heavens. Brave princes died in throngs. At the sea's end hope of return had vanished away. War-shields flashed. The wall of water, the mighty sea-stream, rushed over the heroes. The multitude was fettered fast in death, deprived of escape, cunningly bound. The ocean-sands awaited the doom ordained when the flowing billows, the ice-cold, wandering sea with its salt waves, a naked messenger of ill, a hostile warrior smiting down its foes, should come again to seek its ancient bed.

The blue air was defiled with blood. The roaring ocean menaced the march of the seamen with terror of death, till the Just God swept the warriors away by Moses' hand. The flood foamed, hunting them afar, bearing them off in its deadly embrace. The doomed men died. The sea fell on the land; the skies were shaken. The watery ramparts crumbled, the great waves broke, the towering walls of water melted away, when the Mighty Lord of heaven with holy hand smote the warriors and that haughty race. They could not check the onrush of the sea, nor the fury of the ocean-flood, but it destroyed the multitude in shrieking terror. The raging ocean rose on high; its waters passed over them. A madness of fear was upon them; death-wounds

bled. The high walls, fashioned by the hand of God, fell in upon the marching army.

With ancient sword the foamy-bosomed ocean smote down the watery wall, the unprotecting ramparts, and at the blow of death the great host fell asleep, a sinful throng. Fast shut in they lost their lives, an army pale with terror of the flood, when the brown waste of waters, the raging waves, broke over them. The flower of Egypt perished when the host of Pharaoh, a mighty multitude, was drowned. The foe of God discovered as he sank that the Lord of the ocean-floods was mightier than he, and, terrible in wrath, with deadly power would end the battle. The Egyptians won a bitter recompense for that day's work. Never came any survivor of all that countless host unto his home again to tell of his journey or rehearse to the wives of heroes, throughout the cities, the grievous tidings, the death of their treasure-wardens; but a mighty sea-death came upon them all and swallowed their legions, and slew¹ their heralds, and humbled their boasting.

translated by CHARLES W. KENNEDY: *The Caedmon Poems.*

CYNEWULF'S CRIST: THE RUNE PASSAGE

C. H. E. L. I. 49-53. Of Cynewulf, reputed author of many poems, nothing is really known. He was probably a Northumbrian, perhaps a Mercian, and wrote towards the end of the eighth century. Some of his poems are transmitted in the *Exeter Book*. Four of them, *Crist*, *Juliana*, *Elene* and *Fata Apostolorum*, the first two in the *Exeter Book* and the last two in the *Vercelli*, are signed by the writer in runes that have meaning in the verses and that form the name Cynewulf. The *Crist* poems contain 1640 lines.

The **K**eenest there shall quake, when he heareth the Lord,
 the heaven's Ruler, utter words of wrath
 to those who in the world obeyed Him ill,
 while they might solace find most easily
 for their **D**earning and their **N**eed. Many afeard
 shall wearily await upon that plain
 what penalty He will adjudge to them

¹ Grein: *spilde*.

for their deeds. The *W*insomeness of earthly gauds
 shall then be changed. In days of yore *W*hich unknown,
*L*ake-floods embraced the region of life's joy,
 and all earth's *F*ortune; then each precious thing
 shall be consumed in fire; bright and swift
 the ruddy flame shall rage, and fiercely stride
 o'er the wide world; the plains shall waste away;
 the citadels shall crash; the fire shall speed;
 unpityingly shall he, greediest of guests,
 consume the treasures which men prized of old,
 whilst pride abode with them upon this earth.

translated by Sir ISRAEL GOLLANZCZ: *Cynewulf's Christ.*

CYNEWULF'S CRIST: THE LAST JUDGMENT

With sudden fear, at midnight, direfully,
 the great day of the Lord Omnipotent
 shall overwhelm the denizens of earth
 and bright creation, e'en as some wily robber,
 some daring thief that prowleth in the dark,
 in the swart night, surpriseth suddenly
 careless mortals bound in happy sleep,
 and basely challengeth them unprepared.
 Then unto Zion's hill a mighty host,
 radiant and blissful, shall ascend together,
 the faithful of the Lord; glory shall be theirs.
 Then, too, from all four corners of the world,
 from furthest regions of the realm of earth,
 resplendent angels shall with one accord
 sound their loud trumpets, and mid-earth shall quake
 beneath the feet of men. Gloriously and long
 shall they blow together toward the stars' career,
 and sing melodiously from south and north,
 from east and west, o'er all creation's realm,
 and wake from death unto the final doom,
 aghast from the old earth, the sons of men

and all mankind, and bid them then arise
 forthwith from their deep sleep. There shall one hear
 a sorrowing host and dismal, hard bestead,
 sorely afeard, bewailing woefully
 their deeds when living. Of all presaging signs,
 which aye, erewhile or since, were shown to men,
 this shall be greatest; to wit, the hidden hosts
 of angels and of devils, the bright and dark,
 shall be commingled there; yea, both shall come,
 the white and black, e'en as a home is shaped
 for angels and for devils all unlike.

Then unto Zion's hill, full suddenly,
 a sun-beam from south-east shall come anon
 from the Creator, shining more brilliantly
 than mortals may conceive of in their minds,
 gleaming full brightly; then the Son of God
 shall hitherward appear o'er heaven's vaults;
 wondrous from the east of heaven shall come
 the aspect of the noble King, Christ's presence,
 benign with sweetest grace for His own folk,
 bitter for the baleful, marvellously visaged,
 diversely for the blessed and the forlorn.

Unto the good, the host of holy ones,
 His presence shall be winsome, beauteous, glad,
 loving and gracious, fraught with fair delight.
 Sweet shall it be and pleasant for His beloved
 to gaze upon that aspect all so fair,
 benign of will, the advent of their Lord,
 their mighty Sovran, for in former days
 their words and works were pleasing unto Him.
 Unto the evil, unto sinful men,
 grim shall He be and fearful to behold;
 with their sins they come there, damned eternally.

He that is wise of thought may well regard it
 as a sign that he need be nowise adread,
 if he, afore that Presence, becometh not
 dismayed with terror in his soul, when he see'th
 creation's Lord advance before him there,
 with mighty wonders, to the doom of many,
 while on each side of Him angelic hosts

fare round about, legions of radiant ones,
armies of saints, with numerous multitudes.
Then shall creation's depth resound; o'er earth,
before the Lord, the fiercest fire shall rage;
the burning flames shall roar; the heavens shall burst;
the planets, bright and steadfast, shall fall down,
and the sun itself shall then be changed, all swart,
to the hue of blood,—the sun that shone so bright,
above the former world, for all mankind;
likewise the moon, that erewhile gave forth light
for mortals through the night, shall fall adown,
and the stars shall fall from heaven precipitate,
tempest-driven through the stormy air.

Then to the judgment, with His angel-host,
will come the Omnipotent, the King of Kings,
the Lord majestic, and eke a glorious band
shall be there of His own thanes; yea, holy souls
shall journey with their Lord, when the Guardian of men
shall visit all the races of the earth
with direful penalty. From pole to pole
the blast of heaven's trumpet shall be heard,
and from all seven sides the winds shall moan,
and with tumultuous roar shall blow and break,
waking and wasting all the world with storm,
o'erthrowing all creation with their breath;
a grievous crash shall then be manifest,
loud and immeasurable; of all fierce dins
this shall be fiercest, a terror unto folk.
Then legions of the race of men, accursed,
shall throng unto the all-embracing flame,
and living feel the fire's fatal touch,
some up, some down, with burning all fulfilled.
Small doubt that there the cheerless race of Adam
shall utter lamentations, woebegone,
afflicted with no feeble tribulation,
but with great anguish, direfullest and worst;
the livid surge of fire, the swarthy flame,
shall seize all there alike, at the same time,
afar and wide; to wit, seas with their fish,
earth with her hills, and eke the heaven above

bright with its constellations; the avenging flame
shall forthwith ravage all the regions three,
fiercely, with fearful onset; all middle-earth,
afflicted at that mighty time, shall mourn.

THE JOYS OF THE BLESSED

Then shall the chosen carry before Christ
resplendent treasures; their happiness shall live;
with God, at doomsday, shall they have the joy
of life serene, for it shall be vouchsafed
to every holy man in heaven's realm.

That is the home that never shall know end,
but there the sinless henceforth evermore
shall hold their joyous mirth, and praise the Lord,
their life's dear Guardian; there, begirt with light,
bewrapt in peace, shielded from sorrowing,
glorified by joy, endeared unto the Lord,
radiant with grace, shall they for evermore
enjoy in bliss the angels' fellowship,
and cherish mankind's Guardian, Father of all,
Sovran Preserver of the holy hosts.

There is angels' song; the bliss of the happy;
there is the gracious presence of the Lord,
brighter than the sun, for all the blessed ones;
there is the love of the beloved; life without death's end;
a gladsome host of men; youth without age;
the glory of the heavenly chivalry; health without pain
for righteous workers; and for souls sublime
rest without toil; there is day without dark gloom,
ever gloriously bright; bliss without bale;
friendship 'twixt friends for ever without feud;
peace without enmity for the blest in heaven,
in the communion of saints. Hunger is not there nor thirst,
sleep, nor grievous sickness; nor sun's heat,
nor cold, nor care; but there that blissful band,
the fairest of all hosts, shall aye enjoy
their Sovran's grace, and glory with their King.

translated by Sir ISRAEL GOLLANZC: *Cynewulf's Christ.*

ANDREAS: ANDREW AND THE MEN IN THE SHIP

C. H. E. L. I. 51-54. *Andreas*, a poem of 1722 lines, claimed for Cynewulf, is probably not by him. It 'deals with the missionary labours of St Andrew.... St Andrew is commanded by God to go to the assistance of St Matthew, who is in danger of death at the hands of the Mermedonians, cannibal Ethiopians. He sets out in a boat manned by our Lord and two angels.' (In *Vercelli Book*.)

In the early dawn at the break of day he departed over the sandy dunes unto the sea-beach with leaping heart; and with him fared his thanes across the sand. The ocean roared, seas thundered on the shore. All exultant was that valiant man when he beheld his broad-beamed ship upon the shingle.

Then came the radiant morning, brightest of beacons, over the sea, the holy shining candle of heaven, hastening out of the darkness over the ocean floods. And he beheld three noble thanes, wardens of ships, high-hearted men, sitting in a sea-boat, and hastening onward as they came across the waves. That was God Himself, the Lord of hosts, Eternal, Almighty, with his angels twain. And they were in the garb of sailors, earls unlike seafaring men, when on the ocean's bosom, over a distant course, on the chill water-ways, they dance in ships. And he who stood upon the sand, sturdy of heart upon the shore, hailed them and gave them question:

'Whence come ye voyaging in ships, ye men of might, in your ocean-courser, lone floater of the deep? Whence did the sea-stream bring you over the weltering waves?'

And unto him Almighty God gave answer, so that he wist not, who abode His word, what man of counsel this might be unto whom he spake upon the strand.

'We from the Mermedonian folk have fared from far. Our high-beaked ship, our swift sea-stallion dowered with speed, bare us upon the flood over the whale-road, till that we sought the land of this people, carried onward by the sea as the wind drove us.'

And Andrew spake with humble heart: 'I would fain entreat thee, though I may give but little treasure, but little store of precious things, that thou guide us in thy steep-sided ship, thy high-beaked skiff, over the home of the whale unto that people.'

And may thy guerdon be with God that thou wast kindly unto us upon this journey.'

And again the Helm of princes, the Maker of angels, gave him answer from His vessel:

'Neither may far-travellers dwell there nor alien men enjoy a home; but in that city they suffer death whoso venture thither from distant lands. Hast thou craving now that there in death, beyond the wide-flung sea, thou bring thy life to ruin?' And Andrew gave him answer: 'Unto that folk-land longing urgeth us, exceeding craving unto that mighty city, O dearest Prince, if thou wilt but show kindness unto us upon the billowy sea.'

From His ship's prow the Prince of angels, Saviour of man, gave answer unto him:

'Gladly will we ferry thee with us over the fishes' bath, even unto that land which longing urgeth thee to seek, when ye have paid your toll, the appointed rate, even as ye pay to boatmen and warders of ships over the vessel's side.'

And quickly Andrew spake unto his friend's demand: 'Neither have I beaten gold nor store of treasure, weal nor wealth, nor web of golden strands, nor land, nor linked rings, that I may fulfil thy will, thy craving in the world as thou dost ask.'

And unto him the Prince of men, seated upon the gang-board, held converse across the tossing waves:

'How hath it come to thee, O dearest friend, that thou wouldest fain fare forth upon the watery hills and ocean's confines; and, empty of treasure, seek out a ship over the chill mountain-seas? Hast thou to thy comfort on the ocean-way no store of food, neither pure drink to thy weal? Verily hard is the way of life to him who proveth long sea-voyages.'

Then Andrew gave answer unto Him and, wise of heart, revealed his secret thought:

'It beseemeth ill for that God hath granted thee weal and wealth and fortune in the world, that thou seek answer thus with haughty pride and wounding word. Better is it for every one of men that with humble heart he graciously receive wayfaring men, even as Christ gave bidding, the Prince of glory. For we are His vassal thanes, chosen unto the strife, and rightfully is He the Wielding King, the Shaper of heaven's glory, the One Eternal God of every creature, as He comprehendeth all things by His strength alone, heaven and earth with holy might,

best of victories. Himself He spake that word, the Father of every folk, and bade us hie us forth and strive for souls, throughout the spacious world. "Fare ye now through all the regions of the world, even as far as the sea extends and meadows lie along the way. And in the cities preach ye radiant faith over the bosom of earth, and I will grant you peace. Neither need ye take treasure on that journey, nor gold nor silver; but I will grant you all good things and bless your power!" Now mayest thou know our journey with thoughtful heart, and quickly must I know what thou willest to do to our advantage.'

And unto him Eternal God gave answer: 'If ye are thanes whom God raised up throughout the earth, as ye say to me, and ye observe those things the Holy Lord hath bidden, then joyfully will I ferry you over the ocean-streams as ye have asked.' Then stout of heart, these valiant men went up into the ship. And the soul of every man was gladdened upon the tossing sea.

And mid the ocean surges Andrew prayed the Prince of glory for favour on that sea-faring man and spake this word:

'May the Lord, the Maker of mankind, grant thee honour, gladness in the world and bliss in heaven, as thou hast shown me loving-kindness upon this journey.'

And the holy man sat him down nigh unto the shipman, noble beside noble. Never did I hear of vessel fairer fraught with goodly treasure. For in it sat these warriors, these noble princes, beauteous thanes. Then spake the mighty Prince, Eternal and Almighty, bade His angel go, His radiant vassal thane, and bring forth food and gladden that wretched man on the ocean surges, that they the more easily might endure their course over the tossing waves.

translated by CHARLES W. KENNEDY: *The Poems of Cynewulf.*

CYNEWULF'S *ELENE*: THE SEA JOURNEY

C. H. E. L. I. 55-56. '*Elene* is, undoubtedly, Cynewulf's masterpiece.... The story is that of the discovery of the true cross by Helena, the mother of the emperor Constantine.... Cynewulf's poem...is contained in fourteen cantos or "fits." It is written in a simple, dramatic style, interspersed with imaginative and descriptive passages of great beauty. The glamour and pomp of war, the gleam of jewels, the joy of ships dancing on the waves, give life and colour to a narrative permeated by the deep and serious purpose of the author.'

And the praise of Christ was in the soul of the emperor, and he was steadfastly minded of the radiant cross and bade his mother fare through all the ways of earth, with a multitude of folk, unto the Jewish land, with a band of warriors eagerly seek out where the holy rood of glory, the cross of the noble king, was buried in the earth. Nor was Elene slow unto this journey, nor despised the word of her giver of joy, her son; but swift was the woman to the willing voyage as the helm of hosts had bidden her, the lord of mailed men. Most speedily a band of earls began to hasten down unto the deep water. Along the sea's margin stood harnessed ocean-steeds, fettered sea-stallions floating on the sound. Then was the lady's journey easy to be known, when she sought out the tossing floods with all her train. There stood many a goodly man on the ocean's rim. Now and again they hastened over the border-paths, one troop behind another; they loaded those stallions of the waves with battle-sarks, with shield and lance and fighting men in byrnies, with man and maid.

Then they let their high-flanked coursers of the deep drive foaming over the sea-beast's home. Oft in the ocean tumult the ship's side felt the swinging blows of the billows; the sea roared. Never before or since did I hear that queen led fairer band over the watery ways, on the ocean-stream. Then might he have seen, whoso beheld that journey, sea-ships plunge through the billowy paths, and scud under bellying sails, steeds of the ocean stride, and wave-ships skim. Blithe were the winsome-hearted warriors; the queen had joy of the journey. And when the ring-stemmed ships glided un⁺ their haven in the Grecian land, over the ocean floods, they left their vessels, much tossed of the tides, their old sea-homes, fast at anchor to await upon the waves the destiny

of the band, when the battle-queen with her force of warriors might seek them out again over the eastern ways. There might be seen upon an earl woven byrnies and proven sword, excellent battle-dress, many a visored helm and fair boar-crest. There were warriors of the ashen spear, fighting men about their victor-queen, ready to take their warlike way. Those stalwart men of battle, heralds of Caesar, heroes of war harnessed in armour, fared onward gladsomely into the Grecian land, and there was seen among that army-host full many a treasure gem in setting of gold, the gift of their lord. And in her heart, eager in soul, the blessed Elene was steadfastly heedful of her prince's will, that over the battle plains with proven band of wielders of the linden shield, with troop of spearmen, she should seek the Jewish land. And so it fell that in a little space of time that myriad host of men, those war-famed earls, those warriors able with the ashen spear, came unto Jerusalem within the city, in mighty train round about their noble queen.

translated by CHARLES W. KENNEDY: *The Poems of Cynewulf.*

THE DREAM OF THE ROOD

C. H. E. L. I. 56-58. Generally claimed for Cynewulf, but not certainly his. It is preserved in the *Vercelli Book*, and portions of it are to be found carved in runes on the much-discussed Ruthwell cross. 'The Dream of the Rood' is the choicest blossom of Old English Christian poetry; religious feeling has never been more exquisitely clothed than in these one hundred and forty [156] lines of alliterative verse....We have no other instance of a dream-poem in pre-Conquest England....The poet dreamed a dream, and in it saw the holy rood decked with gems and shining gloriously. Angels guarded it, and, at its sight, the singer was afeared, for he was stained with guilt....As he watched, it spoke, and told the story of the crucifixion, the descent from the cross, the resurrection.' The whole poem follows.

*Those parts which can be read on the Ruthwell Cross are
printed in italic letters.*

List! a dream of dreams is now my theme.
'Twas midnight when the vision met my gaze;
hushed was the speech of men in silent rest.
Methought I there beheld a wondrous tree,
borne aloft, all wrapt about with light;

never was tree so bright; it was a beacon
of molten gold, and gems shone forth therefrom,
four below, nigh earth, and five above
on the spreading arms; God's angels, ever-fair,
gazed on 't,—*a gallows-tree, but not of shame;*
angels and holy spirits gazed thereon,
and men on earth, yea, all *creation*,—
a wondrous tree of triumph! and sin-stained I,
wounded with guilt, I saw that glorious tree
shining so brightly in its golden gear,
its rich adornments; the staff of sovran might
right fittingly was all bedight with gems.
But yet, e'en through the gold might I discern
the pangs they felt, those sufferers of old,
when first the blood o'er its right side streamed forth.
I, too, was sore perturbed; the wondrous sight
thrilled me with fear: I saw the hast'ning beacon
changing in garb and hue, now damped with wet,
and soiled with running blood, now decked with gold.
Long lay I there, and long I gazed therat,
and, sad in soul, beheld the Saviour's tree,
until I heard how it gave forth a voice;
and these words spake to me that holiest wood:—
“Twas long ago, yet I remember well,
how I was hewn adown at the forest's edge,
cut from my stem, and strong foes took me thence;
made me a spectacle; bade me bear their outcasts;
bore me on their shoulders; set me on a hill;
foes fixed me there. Then saw I mankind's Lord
hastening in His might to ascend me there:
I dared not then oppose the word of God,
or bend or break asunder, though I saw
earth's bosom quake; yea, all His foes might I
have laid full low, yet stood I firm.
Then the young warrior prepared himself—
'twas God Almighty, resolute and strong;
brave, in the sight of many, He went up
upon the lofty cross, to save mankind.
I trembled in His clasp, yet dared not bow,
or fall to earth; I had to stand there firm.

*A cross they stood me there ; I uplifted the great King,
the Lord of Heaven, and yet I dared not stoop.*

*They pierced me with dark nails : you see the wounds,
the open gashes ; I durst harm none of them.*

*They scorned us both together. Stained was I
with the blood that streamed forth from His side, when He,
as man, had sent His spirit on its way.*

Many a bitter pang endured I there,
upon that mount; I saw the Lord of Hosts
cruelly bestead; I saw the darkness shroud
with covering of clouds the Ruler's corse;
day's splendour fled before the shades of night,
wan 'neath the welkin. All creation wept;
their King's fall mourned they; *Christ was on the Cross.*

*Then men came thither, hastening from afar
unto their noble Prince. All this saw I.*

*Sore pained, I bowed me to the hands of men,
humbly, with all my strength. Then took they thence
Almighty God, and raised Him from the rack;
but me the warriors left, standing forlorn,
bespattered all with blood, *wounded with shafts.**

*Him they laid down, limb-weary ; stood by His head ;
they looked upon the Lord of Heaven ; and there awhile
He rested, harassed by that mighty toil.*

*Then 'gan they make an earthy grave for Him,
in the sight of His foes; they wrought it of bright stone;
and laid therein the Lord of Victory;
then over Him they sang a mournful dirge,
sadly, at eventide, when they must leave,
with heavy hearts, the Great King resting there,
with no great retinue to guard His rest.*

We, crosses, stood there in our place awhile,
weeping, until anon fierce warriors came—
(the body, life's fair dwelling, was then cold)—
and therewithal they felled us to the earth,
and (dreadful fate!) in a deep pit they hid us;
but me the servants of the Lord found there;
with silver and with gold they decked me o'er.
Now mayst thou hear, thou dear beloved friend,
what deeds of baleful men, what direful griefs,

I once endured; but now the time is come,
and, far and wide, all men throughout the earth,
yea, all this great creation, honour me,
and pray unto this sign. On me God's Son
suffered awhile; wherefore I firmly now
tower high 'neath Heaven, and it is mine to heal
each of mankind who stands in awe of me.
Of yore was I the cruellest punishment,
most loathsome unto men, ere I made clear
the way of Life for all who speak the word.
Lo, me the Prince of glory, Heaven's Lord,
hath glorified above all forest-trees,
as He, Almighty God, hath glorified
His mother, Mary, above womankind.
Now bid I thee, thou dear beloved friend,
to tell aright this Vision unto men;
reveal in words, that 'tis the Tree of Glory,
whereon Almighty God endured dire pangs
for mortals' sins, and Adam's old offence.
The death He tasted there; yet in His might
the Lord arose again to help mankind;
He thence ascended into Heaven; He comes
into the world again to visit folk;
at Doomsday will He come, the Lord Himself,
Almighty God, and angel-hosts with Him,
wielding the power of doom; He then will judge
each man, as he erewhile hath merited,
during the fading days of life on earth.
Not any one may then be free from fear,
when the All-wielding Lord shall speak the word,
when He will ask before that multitude,
where is the man who in God's name would taste
of bitter death, as He did, on the Cross.
They then will dread, and little will they know
wherewith to make reply to Christ's request.
Yet none need there know any touch of fear,
who bears within his breast the best of signs:
yea, by the Cross, the soul of every man,
leaving the track of earth, finds Heaven's realm,
if he but yearn to dwell there with the Lord.'

With blithesome mood, with all my spirit's might,
I prayed then to the Cross; I was alone;
no men were with me there; my very soul
was eager for departure; I had endured
too many hours of longing. Life's hope is now
that I may seek that Tree of Victory,
and, all alone, and oftenest of men,
may worthily adore it; my will is set thereon;
'tis strong within my heart: for my defence
I look but to the Rood. Few mighty friends
have I on earth; they have departed hence
from the world's joys; they sought the King of Glory;
with the High Father live they now in Heaven;
they dwell in glory; and I, too, day by day,
await the hour when this, the Prince's Cross,
once seen by me on earth, shall fetch me forth
from this poor life, and bring me to that place,
where bliss abounds, and all the heavenly joys,
where at the feast the Sovran's folk doth sit,
where bliss is everlasting. May He then
appoint a place, where I may thenceforth dwell
in glory, sharing with the Just their joys!
The Lord befriend me, He that suffered once
on earth upon the Cross for mankind's sins!
He then redeemed us, and gave life to us,
a home in Heaven. Hope was then renewed,
and bliss and joy, to those who burnt before.
The Son came back as Victor from the fight,
with mighty triumph; with Him a multitude,
a troop of souls, the mighty Sovran brought
into God's kingdom. Joy to angels, joy
to all the Saints then dwelling there in glory,
in Heaven's heights, when He, their Ruler, came,
the Lord Almighty, back unto His realm.

translated by Sir ISRAEL GOLLANZ in *The Ancient Cross Shafts at Bewcastle and Ruthwell* by
the Right Reverend Bishop G. F. BROWNE.

THE DEATH OF GUTHLAC

C.H.E.L. I. 58. By Cynewulf (?). In *Exeter Book*. Its 1353 lines tell the story of the Mercian saint, Guthlac. ‘The writer has entered into the spirit of the last great struggle with the powers of darkness and death, even as Bunyan did when he related the passage of Christian through the Valley of the Shadow of Death.’

Then he sank back against the wall and bowed his head, yet he still held strength within him, and whiles he drew his breath, mighty in vigour. From his mouth came forth the sweetest of odours, even as the flowering herbs are fragrant in the summer-time, firmly standing in their places in the meadows, joyously blooming, blowing, honey-sweet. So all that long day until the evening that holy man drew breath.

Then the noble gleam sought its setting; wan under the clouds darkened the northern heavens, wrapping the world in mist, en-folding it in darkness. Over the moving earth, the beauties of the world, the night came down. Then in holiness from heaven came a mighty radiance, shining with light and lustre over the homes of men. And there the blessed man with valour abode the ending of his days, racked with pangs of death. A glorious splendour all the long night shone brightly round about that noble man; the shadows waned, dissolved beneath the heavens. That brilliant light, that heavenly candle-gleam, lay round about the holy house from evening twilight till from out the east over the deep-sea path came the stir of dawn, the warm sun. The blessed man of glory, mindful of his valour, spake to his attendant thane, brightly to his faithful follower:

‘Now is it time that thou fare hence, bethink thee of thine errands all, and quickly bear the message to that dearest lady as I aforetime gave thee bidding. Now is my spirit parting from the body, eager for the joys of God.’

And strengthened by the sacrament, that holy food, he lifted up his hands in humbleness, and opened eke his eyes, the holy jewels of the head; glad of heart he lifted up his gaze unto the heavenly kingdom, to rewards of grace, and sent his spirit, beauteous in its works, unto the bliss of glory.

Then was Guthlac’s soul led blessedly upon its upward way; angels carried it unto its eternal joy. The body grew cold, empty of life under the upper air. Then a radiance shone forth, brightest

of beams. All that beacon, that heavenly brilliance, lay round about the holy house from the ground upward like a tower of flame, raised upright to the roof of heaven, seen brighter than the sun under the sky, a beauty as of noble stars. And bands of angels chanted songs of triumph; the sound was heard in the air under heaven, the harmony of noble voices.

So that dwelling-place, the blessed man's estate, was filled within with bliss and pleasant odours, the wondrous sound of angel voices. There was it fairer and more winsome than any voice of earth may tell of, how that perfume rose, and harmony; heavenly strains and holy song were heard; the glory of God, peal after peal. The island rocked, the plains of earth were moved.

translated by CHARLES W. KENNEDY: *The Poems of Cynewulf*

THE LAND OF THE PHOENIX

C. H. E. L. I. 58–59. Attributed to Cynewulf. ‘In *The Phoenix* we have, for the first time [in English], a poet attempting...to paint an ideal landscape, the beauty and gentleness of summer climes, the wealth of tropical nature, the balminess of a softer air, where there shall be no more, or only a sun-lit, sea, unlike the sullen gloom of the northern waters.’ In *Exeter Book*, 677 lines.

Far away to the East there lies, so I have heard, the noblest of lands, famous among men. This region is not accessible to many rulers in the world, but is removed by the power of God from the workers of evil. Beauteous is that plain, gladdened with joys, with the sweetest odours of earth. Peerless is the island, noble the Creator, high-hearted and abounding in power, who established that land. Before the blessed ones heaven's door often stands open, and the transport of its melodies is revealed. Winsome is that champaign, with green forests stretching wide beneath the skies. There neither rain, nor snow, nor breath of frost, nor blaze of fire, nor downpour of hail, nor fall of hoarfrost, nor heat of sun, nor ever-during cold, nor warm weather, nor winter shower, works aught of harm; but unscathed and flourishing the plain ever abides. That noble land is blowing with blossoms. There neither hills nor mountains stand steep, nor do crags tower high, as here with us; there slope no glens nor dales, no mountain-caves, nor mounds, nor banks, nor aught that is rugged; but the noble field flourishes beneath the clouds, burgeoning with delights.

That glorious land, as sages reveal to us in their writings, is twelve cubits higher than any mountain which here with us towers brightly beneath the stars of heaven. Serene is that field of victory; there gleams the sunny grove, the fair forest; the bright fruitage falls not, but the trees stand ever green, as God commanded them. Winter and summer alike the forest is hung with fruits. The leaves wither not beneath the sky, nor will fire ever injure them until the final change shall pass upon the world. As, long ago, when the onset of waters, the flood of ocean, covered the whole world, the face of the earth, this noble plain stood scatheless and shielded against the rush of angry billows, happy and inviolate through the grace of God, so shall it abide blooming until the Lord's judgment shall come with flame, what time the halls of death, the dark abodes of men, shall open to the day.

In that land there is no enemy, neither weeping nor misery, no sign of woe, nor age, nor sorrow, nor pinching death, nor loss of life, nor coming of harm, neither sin, nor strife, nor tribulation, nor struggle of poverty, nor lack of wealth, nor anxiety, nor sleep, nor sore disease. Neither do winter's missiles, nor fierce change of weather beneath the sky, nor the hard frost with its chill icicles, smite any one.

There neither hail nor hoar-frost nor windy cloud descends to the earth, nor does water fall smitten by the wind, but wondrous streams spring up as wells, and the winsome waters from the middle of the wood irrigate the soil with their fair flowing. Every month they burst sea-cold from the greensward, and in their seasons traverse gloriously the grove; for so is the Lord's behest that twelve times the best of floods shall gush through that noble land.

The groves are hung with lovely fruits; the holy ornaments of the wood never wane beneath the heavens, nor do the blossoms, the beauty of the trees, fall to earth; but there on the trees the laden branches, with fruit ever-new, stand splendidly on that meadow, for ever green. Gaily decked by the might of the holy One, that bright forest knows no interruption of its beauty, and holy fragrance floats throughout that blissful land. Never shall aught of change befall it until He who in the beginning established the masterly creation shall bring it to an end.

translated by ALBERT S. COOK: *Select Translations from Old English Poetry* (Cook and Tinker).

RIDDLES: THE STORM-SPIRIT ON LAND

C. H. E. L. I. 60-61. Many riddles, nearly a hundred in number, are transmitted in the *Exeter Book*. 'They are closely connected with similar collections of Latin riddles, more especially one by Aldhelm...the first writer to acclimate the Latin riddle in England.'

What hero's wit so dexterous and keen
 Can tell who drives me onward in my course,
 When in the terror of my strength I rise
 Mid intermittent peals of thunder, hurtling,
 Sweep over earth and smite with fire the buildings
 Of nations, ravaging their halls? The smoke
 Tawny ascends above the roofs, and tumult
 Is in the land, and men's death-agony.
 Then I assail the woods, fair-fruited glades,
 And fell the trees—I, canopied with water,
 By powers sublime commissioned from afar
 To drive in hurrying career. I wear
 Upon my back that which enshrouded once
 The habitants of earth of every kind,
 Bodies and souls, within one common tomb.
 Tell, now, what mighty power can compass me,
 Or what I'm called, that can uplift this burden.

THE STORM-SPIRIT IN THE SEA

The billows crash above me while I move,
 No man knows whither, searching out the earth
 In the vast caverns of the sea. Then stirs
 The ocean, and impels the watery mass
 To burst in foam. Fiercely the whale-mere rises
 And shouts aloud and groans in mighty pain,
 While sounds the tramp of floods along the shore.
 Against precipitous cliffs incessantly
 Rocks, sand, and heaving waves and weeds are hurled.
 Yet toiling, robed with the strength of many waters,
 I stir the soil of ocean's ample grounds,

Nor can I 'scape the whelming tide, till he
 That is my guide allows. O man of wisdom,
 Tell who may wrest me from the encircling grasp
 Of water, when the streams again are stilled,
 And waves that covered me beat harmony.

THE BIBLE MANUSCRIPT

An enemy deprived me of my life,
 Stripped me of worldly strength, immersed me then
 In water, whence again he took me dripping,
 Planted me in the sun, and there I lost
 My nap of hair. The knife's keen edge then dressed me,
 Sharpened with pumice. Fingers folded me,
 And next the joyous quill traced eagerly
 Across my burnished surface, scattering
 The fluent drops along. Again it drank
 Of the tinctured stream, again stepped over me
 With blackening print. The craftsman bound me then
 In leathern covers locked with golden clasps,
 The wondrous work of artists. Thus adorned
 With scarlet dyes resplendent, lo! in me
 The glorious abodes afar renowned,
 The Shield of nations, and good will toward men!

And if the children of this world will use me,
 The happier, the surer of success
 They'll be, the keener-hearted, and in thought
 The kinder, and more fraught with wisdom. Then
 More friends they'll have—their own, familiar friends
 So good and true, and capable, and trusty—
 Who will prolong their fame and happiness
 And hedge them round with graceful gifts, and fast
 In bonds of love within their bosoms fold them.
 Find out what I am called for men's advantage!
 Famous in sacred story is my name,
 Renowned 'mongst heroes, and itself divine.

translated by HERBERT B. BROUGHAM: *Select Translations from Old English Poetry* (Cook and Tinker).

CHARM FOR BEWITCHED LAND

C. H. E. L. i. 40, 64. See also Cockayne's *Leechdoms, Wortcunning, and Starcraft of Early England* (1866). 'Pagan feeling and nominal Christianity are inextricably mixed' in the following *Charm*, one of 'the few traces that remain of the religious poetry of heathen times.'

'Here is the remedy with which thou canst improve thy fields if they will not bring forth, or if any evil thing is done to them through sorcery or witchcraft.' [After certain ceremonies,] 'take the seed, and put it on the body of the plough, and then say:

Erce, Erce, Erce, mother of Earth,
 May the Almighty, the eternal Lord, grant thee
 Fields fertile and flourishing,
 Fruitful and full of vigour,
 . . . bright harvests,
 And the harvests of the broad barley,
 Harvests of the white wheat,
 And all the harvests of the earth.
 O eternal Lord, and His saints that are in heaven,
 Grant to the owner
 That his field be kept from every foe,
 And defended against all harm,
 From sorceries sown throughout the land.
 Now I pray the King who created this world
 That no garrulous woman or crafty man
 Be able to pervert words thus spoken.

Then drive forth the plough, and cut the first furrow, and say:

Well be it with thee, Earth the mother of men!
 Fruitful mayest thou be in the embrace of God,
 Filled with food for the service of men.'

translated by WILLIAM O. STEVENS: *Select Translations from Old English Poetry* (Cook and Tinker).

LATIN WRITINGS IN ENGLAND TO THE TIME OF ALFRED

GILDAS THE WISE: AURELIUS CONANUS

C. H. E. L. 1. 65-69. See also the section in the Arthurian legend. There exist various scattered documents of British origin produced outside Britain during this period. Thus, there are the remains of Pelagius (born c. 370), who seems to have been actually the earliest British author,—he was certainly the earliest British heretic,—the short tract of Fastidius on the Christian life, and ‘the two wonderful books of St Patrick—the *Confession* and the *Letter to Coroticus*—which, in spite of their barbaric style, whereof the author was fully conscious, are among the most living and attractive monuments of ancient Christianity.’ These lie outside the scope of this work, as do ‘the earliest piece of Latin verse produced in these islands, the *Hymn of St Sechnall*, ...the hymns of the Bangor antiphonary, the writings of Columban and the lives and remains of the Irish missionaries abroad.’ Of ‘our earliest indigenous literary products...the list is headed by two somewhat uncouth fragments, marked off from almost all that follow them by the fact that they are British and not English in origin. These are the book of Gildas and the *History of the Britons*.’ The facts about Gildas are disputed, but he appears to have been born about 500, to have written the book which we possess shortly before 547 and to have died abroad about 570. His work, differently named in the MSS, is entitled by Mommsen, its latest editor, ‘Of Gildas the Wise concerning the destruction and conquest of Britain, and his lamentable castigation uttered against the kings, princes and priests thereof.’ Gildas is prophet-historian. He denounces his times in the pages of a history of Britain, ‘which, largely used by Bede,...is almost our only literary authority for the period.’ It comes down to forty-four years after the battle of Mount Badon. The greater part of it is almost scriptural in denunciation. ‘Gildas is a dark and sad figure. Night is falling round him; all that he has been taught to prize is gone from him or going; and, when he looks upon his land, behold darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.’ (*‘Conanus’* is the form in Geoffrey and Polydore Vergil; Mommsen reads ‘Caninus.’)

Thou also Aurelius Conanus, whelp of the lion in the prophet’s phrase, what dost thou? art thou not whelmed, like him whom I named¹, if not even more desperately, in the mire of parricides, whoredoms and adulteries as in waves of a sea that are breaking

¹ Constantine of Devon.

TURRIS PORTUORUM AEGAEI CINIDICI
 INHABITABO INTABERNACULUM QD INSACCALA
 PROTEGAR IN DELAMONTO ALARUM TURRUM
 QD TUOS EXAUDIISTI ORATIONEM MEAM OEOISU
 HERCOTIXICM TIDENTIB NOMENTUM
 AIES SUPERDICS REGIS AEGAEIS ANNO SCIAS USQ
 INDICM SNECALI ET SNECALA PERMANEBIT IN Q
 TERNUM INCONSPETUO
 MISERICORDIAM ET AGERIT XTEM QD IS REQUIRES
 EORUM SIC PSALMAM NOMINITUS OS INSAC
 CALAM SNECALI ATREDOAM DACTYLICHOEOLINDI
 INFINEM PRO IDIT HUN PSALMUS DAVID
 HECO SUBTERRANEA ANTIQUA
 A KIPSO OMNI SALATARIMEO
 GENIO IPSE EST OSMEAS ET SALATARISMOIS
 AEGAEORUM NON MOABORUM AMPRIAS
 IDOUSQUE IN RUITIS IN HOMINES INTERFICITIS
 UNIVERSOS TANTQVAM PARVIT UNCLINATO
 ET MACHERIAE IN PULSAE
 VERUM Tamen honorem meum cogitaverunt
 REPELLERE CUCURRI INSITIUS ORESU BENODI
 CEVANT ET WORDESU MALLEOIEBANT DILAT

upon thee to thy doom? dost thou not hate thy country's peace as it were a mortal serpent and, in thine unrighteous thirst for civil wars and daily raids, shut against thy soul the gates of heavenly peace and refreshment? I beseech thee, now that thou art left alone like a dying tree in the midst of the field, remember the hollow pride of thy forefathers and thy brethren, and their early and untimely death: wilt thou for thy pious deserts reach an hundred years, or be preserved to equal the age of Methuselah wellnigh alone out of all thy stock? By no means. Unless, as saith the psalmist, thou turn quickly unto the Lord, the sword will shortly be wielded against thee by that King who by the prophet saith 'I will kill and make alive: I will smite and heal, and there is none that can deliver out of mine hand.' Wherefore shake thyself from thy foul dust and turn with thine whole heart unto Him that made thee, that, 'when His wrath is kindled, yea, but a little' thou mayst be 'blessed, trusting in Him': otherwise eternal pains await thee, continually to be ground down and never consumed, in the cruel gulf of hell.

translated for this work by Dr M. R. JAMES, Provost of Eton.

BEDE: ST GREGORY AND THE ANGLES

C. H. E. L. I. 79-84. 'Bede is by far the greatest name which our period presents....He died in 735 at Jarrow, where, practically, his whole life of sixty-three years had been spent.' The long list of Bede's writings includes works on metre, grammar, science, history and theology. He also wrote verses. *The Ecclesiastical History of the English Race* is in five books (in Latin) and tells the story of England from the coming of Julius Caesar to the writer's own time. As a historian Bede is careful and exact, distinguishing plainly between authoritative and hearsay evidence. 'From the literary point of view the book is admirable. There is no affectation of learning, no eccentricity of vocabulary.'

Nor is the account of St Gregory, which has been handed down to us by the tradition of our ancestors, to be passed by in silence, in relation to his motives for taking such interest in the salvation of our nation. It is reported that some merchants, having just arrived at Rome on a certain day, exposed many things for sale in the market-place, and abundance of people

resorted thither to buy. Gregory himself went with the rest; and, among other things, some boys were set to sale, their bodies white, their countenances beautiful, and their hair very fine. Having viewed them, he asked, as is said, from what country or nation they were brought? and was told, from the island of Britain, whose inhabitants were of that personal appearance. He again inquired whether those islanders were Christians, or still involved in the errors of paganism? and was informed that they were pagans. Then fetching a deep sigh from the bottom of his heart, ‘Alas! what pity,’ said he, ‘that the author of darkness is possessed of men of such fair countenances; and that being remarkable for such graceful aspects, their minds should be void of inward grace.’ He therefore again asked, what was the name of that nation? and was answered, that they were called Angles. ‘Right,’ said he, ‘for they have an Angelic face, and it becomes such to be co-heirs with the Angels in heaven. What is the name?’ proceeded he, ‘of the province from which they are brought?’ It was replied, that the natives of that province were called Deiri. ‘Truly are they *De ira*,’ said he, ‘withdrawn from wrath, and called to the mercy of Christ. How is the king of that province called?’ They told him his name was Ælla: and he, alluding to the name, said, ‘Alleluia, the praise of God the Creator must be sung in those parts.’

translated by J. A. GILES: *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of England* (revised).

BEDE: THE CONVERSION OF KING EDWIN

The king, hearing these words, answered, that he was both willing and bound to receive the faith which he taught; but that he would confer about it with his principal friends and counsellors, to the end that if they also were of his opinion, they might all together be cleansed in Christ the Fountain of Life. Paulinus consenting, the king did as he said; for, holding a council with the wise men, he asked of every one in particular what he thought of the new doctrine, and the new worship that was preached? To which the chief of his own priests, Coifi, imme-

diately answered, ‘O king, consider what this is which is now preached to us; for I verily declare to you, that the religion which we have hitherto professed has, as far as I can learn, no virtue in it. For none of your people has applied himself more diligently to the worship of our gods than I; and yet there are many who receive greater favours from you, and are more preferred than I, and are more prosperous in all their undertakings. Now if the gods were good for any thing, they would rather forward me, who have been more careful to serve them. It remains, therefore, that if upon examination you find those new doctrines which are now preached to us better and more efficacious, we immediately receive them without any delay.’

Another of the king’s chief men, approving of his words and exhortations, presently added: ‘The present life of man, O king, seems to me, in comparison of that time which is unknown to us, like to the swift flight of a sparrow through the room wherein you sit at supper in winter, with your commanders and ministers, and a good fire in the midst, whilst the storms of rain and snow prevail abroad; the sparrow, I say, flying in at one door, and immediately out at another, whilst he is within, is safe from the wintry storm; but after a short space of fair weather, he immediately vanishes out of your sight, into the dark winter from which he had emerged. So this life of man appears for a short space, but of what went before, or what is to follow, we are utterly ignorant. If, therefore, this new doctrine contains something more certain, it seems justly to deserve to be followed.’ The other elders and king’s councillors, by Divine inspiration, spoke to the same effect.

translation of J. A. GILES.

BEDE: AIDAN AT LINDISFARNE

From the aforesaid island and college of monks, was Aidan sent to instruct the English nation in Christ, having received the dignity of a bishop at the time when Segenius, abbot and priest, presided over that monastery; whence, among other instructions for life, he left the clergy a most salutary example of abstinence or continence. It was the highest commendation of his doctrine, with all men, that he taught no otherwise than he and his

followers had lived; for he neither sought nor loved any thing of this world, but delighted in distributing immediately among the poor whatsoever was given him by the kings or rich men of the world. He was wont to traverse both town and country on foot, never on horseback, unless compelled by some urgent necessity; and wherever in his way he saw any, either rich or poor, he invited them, if infidels, to embrace the mystery of the faith; or, if they were believers, sought to strengthen them in the faith, and to stir them up by words and actions to alms and good works.

His course of life was so different from the slothfulness of our times, that all those who bore him company, whether they were shorn monks or laymen, were employed in meditation, that is, either in reading the Scriptures, or learning psalms. This was the daily employment of himself and all that were with him, wheresoever they went; and if it happened, which was but seldom, that he was invited to eat with the king, he went with one or two clerks, and, having taken a small repast, made haste to be gone with them, either to read or write. At that time, many religious men and women, stirred up by his example, adopted the custom of fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays, till the ninth hour, throughout the year, except during the fifty days after Easter. He never gave money to the powerful men of the world, but only meat, if he happened to entertain them; and, on the contrary, whatsoever gifts of money he received from the rich, he either distributed them, as has been said, to the use of the poor, or bestowed them in ransoming such as had been wrongfully sold for slaves. Moreover, he afterwards made many of those he had ransomed his disciples, and after having taught and instructed them, advanced them to the order of priesthood.

It is reported, that when King Oswald had asked a bishop of the Scots to administer the word of faith to him and his nation, there was first sent to him another man of more austere disposition, who, meeting with no success, and being unregarded by the English people, returned home, and in an assembly of the elders reported, that he had not been able to do any good to the nation he had been sent to preach to, because they were uncivilized men, and of a stubborn and barbarous disposition. They, as is testified, in a great council seriously debated what was to be done, being desirous that the nation should receive the salvation it demanded, and grieving that they had not received the preacher

sent to them. Then said Aidan, who was also present in the council, to the priest then spoken of, ‘I am of opinion, brother, that you were more severe to your unlearned hearers than you ought to have been, and did not at first, conformably to the apostolic rule, give them the milk of more easy doctrine, till being by degrees nourished with the word of God, they should be capable of greater perfection, and be able to practise God’s sublimer precepts.’ Having heard these words, all present began diligently to weigh what he had said, and presently concluded that he deserved to be made a bishop, and ought to be sent to instruct the incredulous and unlearned, since he was found to be endued with singular discretion, which is the mother of other virtues; and, accordingly being ordained, they sent him to their friend King Oswald to preach; and he, as time proved, afterwards appeared to possess all other virtues, as well as the discretion for which he was before remarkable.

translation of J. A. GILES.

BEDE: DRYHTHELM’S VISION OF THE OTHER WORLD

At this time a memorable miracle, and like to those of former days, was wrought in Britain; for, to the end that the living might be saved from the death of the soul, a certain person, who had been some time dead, rose again to life, and related many remarkable things he had seen; some of which I have thought fit here briefly to take notice of. There was a master of a family in that district of the Northumbrians which is called Cuningham, who led a religious life, as did also all that belonged to him. This man fell sick, and his distemper daily increasing, being brought to extremity, he died in the beginning of the night; but in the morning early he suddenly came to life again, and sat up; upon which all those that sat about the body weeping fled away in a great fright; only his wife, who loved him best, though in a great consternation and trembling, remained with him. He, comforting her, said, ‘Fear not, for I am now truly risen from death, and permitted again to live among men; however, I am not to live hereafter as I was wont, but from henceforward after a very

different manner.' Then, rising immediately, he repaired to the oratory of the little town, and continuing in prayer till day, immediately divided all his substance into three parts, one whereof he gave to his wife, another to his children, and the third, belonging to himself, he instantly distributed among the poor. Not long after, he repaired to the monastery of Melrose, which is almost enclosed by the winding of the river Tweed, and having been shaven, went into a private dwelling, which the abbot had provided, where he continued till the day of his death, in such extraordinary contrition of mind and body, that though his tongue had been silent, his life declared that he had seen many things either to be dreaded or coveted, which others knew nothing of.

Thus he related what he had seen. 'He that led me had a shining countenance and a bright garment, and we went on silently, as I thought, towards the north-east. Walking on, we came to a vale of great breadth and depth, but of infinite length. On the left it appeared full of dreadful flames; the other side was no less horrid for violent hail and cold snow flying in all directions; both places were full of men's souls, which seemed by turns to be tossed from one side to the other, as it were by a violent storm; for when the wretches could no longer endure the excess of heat, they leaped into the middle of the cutting cold; and finding no rest there, they leaped back again into the middle of the unquenchable flames. Now whereas an innumerable multitude of deformed spirits were thus alternately tormented far and near, as far as could be seen, without any intermission, I began to think that this perhaps might be hell, of whose intolerable flames I had often heard talk. My guide, who went before me, answered to my thought, saying, "Do not believe so, for this is not the hell you imagine."

'When he had conducted me, much frightened with that horrid spectacle, by degrees, to the farther end, on a sudden I saw the place begin to grow dusk and be filled with darkness. When I came into it, the darkness, by degrees, grew so thick, that I could see nothing besides it and the shape and garment of him that led me. As we went on through the shades of night, on a sudden there appeared before us frequent globes of black flames, rising as it were out of a great pit, and falling back again into the same. When I had been conducted thither, my leader

suddenly vanished, and left me alone in the midst of darkness and this horrid vision, whilst those same globes of fire, without intermission, at one time flew up and at another fell back into the bottom of the abyss; and I observed that all the flames, as they ascended, were full of human souls, which, like sparks flying up with smoke, were sometimes thrown on high, and again, when the vapour of the fire ceased, dropped down into the depth below. Moreover, an insufferable stench came forth with the vapours, and filled all those dark places.

‘Having stood there a long time in much dread, not knowing what to do, which way to turn, or what end I might expect, on a sudden I heard behind me the noise of a most hideous and wretched lamentation, and at the same time a loud laughing, as of a rude multitude insulting captured enemies. When that noise, growing plainer, came up to me, I observed a gang of evil spirits dragging the howling and lamenting souls of men into the midst of the darkness, whilst they themselves laughed and rejoiced. Among those men, as I could discern, there was one shorn like a clergyman, a layman, and a woman. The evil spirits that dragged them went down into the midst of the burning pit; and as they went down deeper, I could no longer distinguish between the lamentation of the men and the laughing of the devils, yet I still had a confused sound in my ears. In the meantime, some of the dark spirits ascended from that flaming abyss, and running forward, beset me on all sides, and much perplexed me with their glaring eyes and the stinking fire which proceeded from their mouths and nostrils; and threatened to lay hold on me with burning tongs, which they had in their hands, yet they durst not touch me, though they frightened me. Being thus on all sides enclosed with enemies and darkness, and looking about on every side for assistance, there appeared behind me, on the way that I came, as it were, the brightness of a star shining amidst the darkness; which increased by degrees, and came rapidly towards me: when it drew near, all those evil spirits, that sought to carry me away with their tongs, dispersed and fled.

‘He, whose approach put them to flight, was the same that led me before; who, then turning towards the right, began to lead me, as it were, towards the south-east, and having soon brought me out of the darkness, conducted me into an atmosphere of clear light. While he thus led me in open light, I saw a vast

wall before us, the length and height of which, in every direction, seemed to be altogether boundless. I began to wonder why we went up to the wall, seeing no door, window, or path through it. When we came to the wall, we were presently, I know not by what means, on the top of it, and within it was a vast and lovely field, so full of fragrant flowers that the odour of its delightful sweetness immediately dispelled the stink of the dark furnace, which had pierced me through and through. So great was the light in this place, that it seemed to exceed the brightness of the day, or the sun in its meridian height. In this field were innumerable assemblies of men in white, and many companies seated together rejoicing. As he led me through the midst of those happy inhabitants, I began to think that this might, perhaps, be the kingdom of heaven, of which I had often heard so much. He answered to my thought, saying, "This is not the kingdom of heaven, as you imagine."

"When we had passed those mansions of blessed souls and gone farther on, I discovered before me a much more beautiful light, and therein heard sweet voices of persons singing, and so wonderful a fragrance proceeded from the place, that the other which I had before thought most delicious, then seemed to me but very indifferent; even as that extraordinary brightness of the flowery field, compared with this, appeared mean and inconsiderable. When I began to hope we should enter that delightful place, my guide, on a sudden stood still; and then turning back, led me back by the way we came.

"When we returned to those joyful mansions of the souls in white, he said to me, "Do you know what all these things are which you have seen?" I answered, I did not; and then he replied, "That vale you saw, so dreadful for consuming flames and cutting cold, is the place in which the souls of those are tried and punished, who, delaying to confess and amend their crimes, at length have recourse to repentance at the point of death, and so depart this life; but nevertheless because they, even at their death, confessed and repented, they shall all be received into the kingdom of heaven at the day of judgment; but many are relieved before the day of judgment, by the prayers, alms, and fasting of the living, and more especially by masses. That fiery and stinking pit which you saw is the mouth of hell, into which whosoever falls shall never be delivered to all eternity. This

flowery place, in which you see these most beautiful young people, so bright and jocund, is that into which the souls of those are received who depart the body in good works, but who are not so perfect as to deserve to be immediately admitted into the kingdom of heaven; yet they shall all, at the day of judgment, see Christ, and partake of the joys of his kingdom; for whoever are perfect in thought, word and deed, as soon as they depart the body, immediately enter into the kingdom of heaven; in the neighbourhood whereof that place is, where you heard the sound of sweet singing, with the fragrant odour and bright light. As for you, who are now to return to your body and live among men again, if you will endeavour nicely to examine your actions, and direct your speech and behaviour in righteousness and simplicity, you shall, after death, have a place or residence among these joyful troops of blessed souls; for when I left you for a while, it was to know how you were to be disposed of." When he had said this to me, I much abhorred returning to my body, being delighted with the sweetness and beauty of the place I beheld, and with the company of those I saw in it. However, I durst not ask him any questions; but in the meantime, on a sudden, I found myself alive among men.'

translation of J. A. GILES (revised).

CUTHBERT'S LETTER ON THE DEATH OF BEDE

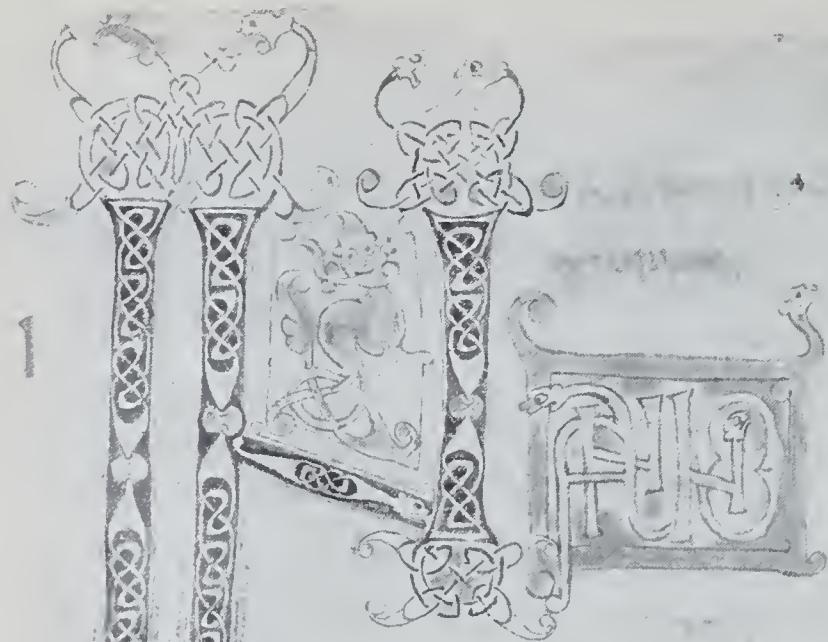
C. H. E. L. i. 79. The story of Bede's death, as related by Cuthbert in his letter to Cuthwin, is of unapproached beauty in its kind.

To his fellow-reader Cuthwin, beloved in Christ, Cuthbert, his schoolfellow; health for ever in the Lord. I have received with much pleasure the small present which you sent me, and with much satisfaction read the letters of your devout erudition; wherein I found that masses and holy prayers are diligently celebrated by you for our father and master, Bede, whom God loved: this was what I principally desired, and therefore it is more pleasing, for the love of him (according to my capacity), in a few words to relate in what manner he departed this world, understanding that you also desire and ask the same. He was

much troubled with shortness of breath, yet without pain, before the day of our Lord's resurrection, that is, about a fortnight, and thus he afterwards passed his life, cheerful and rejoicing, giving thanks to Almighty God every day and night, nay, every hour, till the day of our Lord's ascension, that is, the seventh before the kalends of June [twenty-sixth of May], and daily read lessons to us his disciples, and whatever remained of the day he spent in singing psalms; he also passed all the night awake, in joy and thanksgiving, unless a short sleep prevented it; in which case he no sooner awoke than he presently repeated his wonted exercises, and ceased not to give thanks to God with uplifted hands. I declare with truth, that I have never seen with my eyes, nor heard with my ears, any man so earnest in giving thanks to the living God.

O truly happy man! He chanted the sentence of St Paul the apostle, 'It is fearful to fall into the hands of the living God,' and much more, out of Holy Writ; wherein also he admonished us to think of our last hour, and to shake off the sleep of the soul; and being learned in our poetry, he said some things also in our tongue, for he said, putting the same into English,...'For the journey we must all take, no man becomes wiser of thought than he needs be, to consider before his going hence for what good or evil his soul shall be judged after its departure.'

He also sang antiphons according to our custom and his own, one of which is, 'O glorious King, Lord of all power, who, triumphing this day, didst ascend above all the heavens; do not forsake us orphans; but send down upon us the Spirit of truth which was promised to us by the Father. Alleluia.' And when he came to that word, 'do not forsake us,' he burst into tears, and wept much, and an hour after he began to repeat what he had commenced, and we, hearing it, mourned with him. By turns we read, and by turns we wept, nay, we wept always whilst we read. In such joy we passed the days of Lent, till the aforesaid day; and he rejoiced much, and gave God thanks, because he had been thought worthy to be so weakened. He often repeated, 'That God scourgeth every son whom he receiveth'; and much more out of Holy Scripture; as also this sentence from St Ambrose, 'I have not lived so as to be ashamed to live among you; nor do I fear to die, because we have a gracious God.' During these days he laboured to compose two works well



inimorato praefatior
 ecclipsis & mox sequitur;
 p̄ficiuntur & quo d̄ colimur
 unequum ecclasticorum
 in dignitate superfluitate
 ad suos neutri sui est.
 deus dedit sexta
 eligit & donushu p̄misit
 & episcopum obire studierunt
 in dieu; sed ergo in b̄c cito

worthy to be remembered, besides the lessons we had from him, and singing of Psalms; viz. he translated the Gospel of St John as far as the words, ‘But what are they among so many,’ &c. [St John vi. 9], into our own tongue for the benefit of the church; and some collections out of the Book of Notes of Bishop Isidorus, saying: ‘I will not have my pupils read a falsehood, nor labour therein without profit after my death.’ When the Tuesday before the ascension of our Lord came, he began to suffer still more in his breath, and a small swelling appeared in his feet; but he passed all that day and dictated cheerfully, and now and then among other things, said, ‘Go on quickly, I know not how long I shall hold out, and whether my Maker will not soon take me away.’ But to us he seemed very well to know the time of his departure. And so he spent the night, awake, in thanksgiving; and when the morning appeared, that is, Wednesday, he ordered us to write with all speed what he had begun; and this done, we walked till the third hour with the relics of saints, according to the custom of that day. There was one of us with him, who said to him, ‘Most dear master, there is still one chapter wanting: do you think it troublesome to be asked any more questions?’ He answered, ‘It is no trouble. Take your pen, and make ready, and write fast.’ Which he did, but at the ninth hour he said to me, ‘I have some little articles of value in my chest, such as pepper, napkins, and incense: run quickly, and bring the priests of our monastery to me, that I may distribute among them the gifts which God has bestowed on me. The rich in this world are bent on giving gold and silver and other precious things. But I, in charity, will joyfully give my brothers what God has given unto me.’ He spoke to every one of them, admonishing and entreating them that they would carefully say masses and prayers for him, which they readily promised; but they all mourned and wept, especially because he said, ‘They should no more see his face in this world.’ They rejoiced for that he said, ‘It is time that I return to Him who formed me out of nothing: I have lived long; my merciful Judge well fore-saw my life for me; the time of my dissolution draws nigh; for I desire to die and to be with Christ.’ Having said much more, he passed the day joyfully till the evening; and the boy, above mentioned, said: ‘Dear master, there is yet one sentence not written.’ He answered, ‘Write quickly.’ Soon after, the boy

said, ‘The sentence is now written.’ He replied, ‘It is well, you have said the truth. It is ended. Receive my head into your hands, for it is a great satisfaction to me to sit facing my holy place, where I was wont to pray, that I may also sitting call upon my Father.’ And thus on the pavement of his little cell, singing ‘Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost,’ he breathed his last as he named the Holy Spirit, and so departed to the heavenly kingdom.

translated by HENRY MORLEY:
Illustrations of English Religion.

ALCUIN: ST PETER'S SCHOOL, YORK

G. H. E. L. i. 84–87. Alcuin (735–804), the adviser of Charles the Great, was master of the school of York in 778, but, shortly after, left England and settled at Tours, where he became the apostle of education in the empire of the Franks. See *Historians of the Church of York*, Rolls Series, 71.

Of whom [Archbishop Egbert] the Muse forbids me to say more, passing on to the end of the poem, and to the deeds of my own master, Albert [Aethelbert] the wise, who took the insignia of the venerable see after Egbert.

A good man and just, broad, pious and kind; supporter, teacher and lover of the Catholic faith; ruler, doctor, defender, and pupil of the Church.

Bide with me for a while, I pray ye, youth of York, while I proceed with poetic steps to treat of him, because here he often drenched your senses with nectar, pouring forth sweet juices from his honey-flowing bosom. Fairest Philosophy took him from his very cradle and bore him to the topmost towers of learning, opening to him the hidden things of wisdom. He was born of ancestors of sufficient note, by whose care he was soon sent to kindly school, and entered at the Minster in his early years, that his tender age might grow up with holy understanding. Nor was his parents’ hope in vain; even as a boy as he grew in body so he became proficient in the understanding of books.

Then pious and wise, teacher at once and priest, he was made a colleague of Bishop Egbert, to whom he was nearly allied by right of blood. By him he is made advocate of the clergy, and at the same time is preferred as master in the city of York.

There he moistened thirsty hearts with diverse streams of teaching and the varied dews of learning, giving to these the art of the science of grammar, pouring on those the rivers of rhetoric. Some he polished on the whetstone of law, some he taught to sing together in Aeonian chant, making others play on the flute of Castaly, and run with the feet of lyric poets over the hills of Parnassus. Others the said master made to know the harmony of heaven, the labours of sun and moon, the five belts of the sky, the seven planets, the laws of the fixed stars, their rising and setting, the movements of the air, the quaking of sea and earth, the nature of men, cattle, birds and beasts, the divers kinds of numbers and various shapes. He gave certainty to the solemnity of Easter's return; above all, opening the mysteries of holy writ and disclosing the abysses of the rude and ancient law. Whatever youths he saw of conspicuous intelligence, those he joined to himself, he taught, he fed, he loved; and so the teacher had many disciples in the sacred volumes, advanced in various arts. Soon he went in triumph abroad, led by the love of wisdom, to see if he could find in other lands anything novel in books or schools, which he could bring home with him. He went also devoutly to the city of Romulus, rich in God's love, wandering far and wide through the holy places. Then returning home, he was received everywhere by kings and princes as a prince of doctors, whom great kings tried to keep that he might irrigate their lands with learning. But the master hurrying to his appointed work, returned home to his fatherland by God's ordinance. For no sooner had he been borne to his own shores, than he was compelled to take on him the pastoral care, and made high priest at the people's demand.

But his old fervent industry for reading the Scriptures was not diminished by the weight of his cares, and he was made both a wise doctor and a pious priest.

As prelate he built a great altar where king Edwin had received baptism, covered it in all parts with silver, gold and precious stones and dedicated it to Paul, the doctor of the world, whom as a doctor he especially loved.

Then the illustrious minister in holy orders, the prelate, perfect in good works and full of days, gladly handed over to his beloved disciple Eanwald the episcopal ornaments, while he sought for himself a sequestered cloister in which to devote himself

wholly to God's service. But he gave the dearer treasures of his books to the other son, who was always close to his father's side, thirsting to drink the floods of learning. His name, if you care to know it, these verses on the face of them will at once betray. Between them he divided his wealth of different kinds: to the one, the rule of the church, the ornaments, the lands, the money; to the other, the sphere of wisdom, the school, the master's chair, the books, which the illustrious master had collected from all sides, piling up glorious treasures under one roof.

from *De Pontificibus et Sanctis Ecclesiae Eboraensis Carmen*, translated by ARTHUR F. LEACH: *Educational Charters and Documents*.

ALCUIN: LETTER TO CHARLEMAGNE

I, your Flaccus, in accordance with your exhortation and will, do my utmost in the buildings of St Martin's to provide some with the honey of Holy Scripture, to intoxicate others with the old wine of ancient studies, to feed others with the apples of grammatical subtlety, and to enlighten still others with the marshalling of the stars—which suggests the work of a painter who seeks to beautify for some patron the vaulting of an edifice. Thus I am made many things to many men, that I may train up many to the advancement of the holy Church of God and to the adornment of your imperial reign, lest the grace of Almighty God bestowed upon me, and the bounty of your goodness, be in vain. In some measure, however, I, your servant, lack the choicer books of scholarly erudition which I had in my own country through the devoted industry of my teacher, and even by my own slighter exertions. I say these things to your Excellency to the end that, if perchance it should please your intent, so desirous of all wisdom, I may be permitted to send over some of our young men to obtain everything we need, and bring back into France the flowers of Britain. In this way not only will York be a garden enclosed, but Tours will have its outflowings of Paradise and its pleasant fruits, so that the south wind may come and blow upon the gardens of the Loire, and the spices thereof may flow out....

As far as my moderate abilities will permit, I will not be slothful in sowing the seeds of wisdom among your servants in these parts, being mindful of the sentence: 'In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.' In the morning, when my studies, because of my time of life, were flourishing, I sowed in Britain; now, as my blood grows chill in the evening of my days, I cease not to sow in France, hoping that both, by the grace of God, may spring up.

translated by ALBERT S. COOK: *Select Translations from Old English Prose* (Cook and Tinker).

ALCUIN: LETTER TO EANBALD II ARCHBISHOP OF YORK

Praise and glory to the Lord God Almighty who has preserved my days in good prosperity, so that I might rejoice in the elevation of my dearest son, and that I, the lowest slave of the church, should have educated one of my sons, who, by the grace of Him who is the giver of all good, is thought worthy to be the dispenser of the mysteries of Christ and to labour in my stead in the church where I was brought up and taught, and to preside over the treasures of wisdom, the inheritance of which my beloved master Archbishop Albert left to me.... Your holy wisdom should provide masters for the boys, and the clerks. Let there be separate spheres for those who read books, who serve singing, who are assigned to the writing school. Have special masters for each of these classes, lest having leisure time they wander about the place and practise empty games or be employed in other futilities. Let your most wise prudence, my most beloved son, consider all this, so that a well of all goodness and learning may be found in the principal seat of our nation, from which the thirsty traveller or the lover of church learning, may draw whatever his soul desires.

Let your most diligent piety also consider where to order inns, that is hospitals, to be erected in which the poor and the traveller may be received daily and be relieved at your expense.

translated by ARTHUR F. LEACH.

ALFRED AND THE OLD ENGLISH PROSE OF HIS REIGN

ASSER'S LIFE OF ALFRED

C. H. E. L. i. 88–90. King Alfred (849–901) ‘diligently promoted scholarship, and himself undertook to translate into West Saxon recognised works in Latin prose....So much did scholarship suffer in consequence of the viking raids that, at the date of Alfred’s accession, there was no scholar even south of the Thames who could read the mass-book in Latin. The revival of letters in Wessex was the direct result of the king’s enthusiasm and personal efforts, and his educational aims recall irresistibly the work of Charles the Great.’ Asser, a Welsh cleric, ‘became the king’s most intimate friend and diligently assisted him in the study of Latin.’ His authorship of the *Life* is questioned.

In the year of our Lord’s incarnation 866, which was the eighteenth of king Alfred, Ethelred, brother of Ethelbert, king of the West Saxons, undertook the government of the kingdom for five years; and the same year a large fleet of pagans came to Britain from the Danube, and wintered in the kingdom of the Eastern-Saxons, which is called in Saxon East-Anglia; and there they became principally an army of cavalry. But, to speak in nautical phrase, I will no longer commit my vessel to the power of the waves and of its sails, or keeping off from land steer my round-about course through so many calamities of wars and series of years, but will return to that which first prompted me to this task; that is to say, I think it right in this place briefly to relate as much as has come to my knowledge about the character of my revered lord Alfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons, during the years that he was an infant and a boy.

He was loved by his father and mother, and even by all the people, above all his brothers, and was educated altogether at the court of the king. As he advanced through the years of infancy and youth, his form appeared more comely than that of his brothers; in look, in speech, and in manners he was more graceful than they. His noble nature implanted in him from his cradle

a love of wisdom above all things; but, with shame be it spoken, by the unworthy neglect of his parents and nurses, he remained illiterate even till he was twelve years old or more; but he listened with serious attention to the Saxon poems which he often heard recited, and easily retained them in his docile memory. He was a zealous practiser of hunting in all its branches, and hunted with great assiduity and success; for skill and good fortune in this art, as in all others, are among the gifts of God, as we also have often witnessed.

On a certain day, therefore, his mother was showing him and his brother a Saxon book of poetry, which she held in her hand, and said, ‘Whichever of you shall the soonest learn this volume shall have it for his own.’ Stimulated by these words, or rather by the Divine inspiration, and allured by the beautifully illuminated letter at the beginning of the volume, he spoke before all his brothers, who, though his seniors in age, were not so in grace, and answered, ‘Will you really give that book to one of us, that is to say, to him who can first understand and repeat it to you?’ At this his mother smiled with satisfaction, and confirmed what she had before said. Upon which the boy took the book out of her hand, and went to his master to read it, and in due time brought it to his mother and recited it.

After this he learned the daily course, that is, the celebration of the hours, and afterwards certain psalms, and several prayers, contained in a certain book which he kept day and night in his bosom, as we ourselves have seen, and carried about with him to assist his prayers, amid all the bustle and business of this present life. But, sad to say! he could not gratify his most ardent wish to learn the liberal arts, because, as he said, there were no good readers at that time in all the kingdom of the West-Saxons.

This he confessed, with many lamentations and sighs, to have been one of his greatest difficulties and impediments in this life, namely, that when he was young and had the capacity for learning, he could not find teachers; but, when he was more advanced in life, he was harassed by so many diseases unknown to all the physicians of this island, as well as by internal and external anxieties of sovereignty, and by continual invasions of the pagans, and had his teachers and writers also so much disturbed, that there was no time for reading. But yet among the

impediments of this present life, from infancy up to the present time, and, as I believe, even until his death, he continued to feel the same insatiable desire of knowledge, and still aspires after it.

translated by J. A. GILES: *Six Old English Chronicles.*

ALFRED: PREFACE TO GREGORY'S *PASTORAL CARE*

C. H. E. L. I. 91-93. This preface to what is generally regarded as the first of Alfred's literary works, may be taken as a preface to his series of translations. 'At the same time, it ranks among the most important of Alfred's original contributions to literature.'

King Alfred bids greet bishop Waerferth with his words lovingly and with friendship; and I let it be known to thee that it has very often come into my mind, what wise men there formerly were throughout England, both of sacred and secular orders; and how happy times there were then throughout England; and how the kings who had power over the nation in those days obeyed God and his ministers; and they preserved peace, morality, and order at home, and at the same time enlarged their territory abroad; and how they prospered both with war and with wisdom; and also the sacred orders how zealous they were both in teaching and learning, and in all the services they owed to God; and how foreigners came to this land in search of wisdom and instruction, and how we should now have to get them from abroad if we were to have them. So general was its decay in England that there were very few on this side of the Humber who could understand their rituals in English, or translate a letter from Latin into English; and I believe that there were not many beyond the Humber. There were so few of them that I cannot remember a single one south of the Thames when I came to the throne. Thanks be to God Almighty that we have any teachers among us now. And therefore I command thee to do as I believe thou art willing, to disengage thyself from worldly matters as often as thou canst, that thou mayest apply the wisdom which God has given thee wherever thou canst. Consider what punishments would come upon us on account of this world, if

we neither loved it (wisdom) ourselves nor suffered other men to obtain it: we should love the name only of Christian, and very few of the virtues. When I considered all this I remembered also how I saw, before it had been all ravaged and burnt, how the churches throughout the whole of England stood filled with treasures and books, and there was also a great multitude of God's servants, but they had very little knowledge of the books, for they could not understand anything of them, because they were not written in their own language. As if they had said: 'Our forefathers, who formerly held these places, loved wisdom, and through it they obtained wealth and bequeathed it to us. In this we can still see their tracks, but we cannot follow them, and therefore we have lost both the wealth and the wisdom, because we would not incline our hearts after their example.' When I remembered all this, I wondered extremely that the good and wise men who were formerly all over England, and had perfectly learnt all the books, did not wish to translate them into their own language. But again I soon answered myself and said: 'They did not think that men would ever be so careless, and that learning would so decay; through that desire they abstained from it, and they wished that the wisdom in this land might increase with our knowledge of languages.' Then I remembered how the law was first known in Hebrew, and again, when the Greeks had learnt it, they translated the whole of it into their own language, and all other books besides. And again the Romans, when they had learnt it, they translated the whole of it through learned interpreters into their own language. And also all other Christian nations translated a part of them into their own language. Therefore it seems better to me, if ye think so, for us also to translate some books which are most needful for all men to know into the language which we can all understand, and for you to do as we very easily can if we have tranquillity enough, that is that all the youth now in England of free men, who are rich enough to be able to devote themselves to it, be set to learn as long as they are not fit for any other occupation, until that they are well able to read English writing: and let those be afterwards taught more in the Latin language who are to continue learning and be promoted to a higher rank. When I remembered how the knowledge of Latin had formerly decayed throughout England, and yet many could read English

writing, I began, among other various and manifold troubles of this kingdom, to translate into English the book which is called in Latin *Pastoralis*, and in English Shepherd's Book, sometimes word by word and sometimes according to the sense, as I had learnt it from Plegmund my archbishop, and Asser my bishop, and Grimbald my mass-priest, and John my mass-priest. And when I had learnt it as I could best understand it, and as I could most clearly interpret it, I translated it into English; and I will send a copy to every bishopric in my kingdom; and on each there is a clasp worth fifty mancuses. And I command in God's name that no man take the clasp from the book or the book from the minster: it is uncertain how long there may be such learned bishops as now, thanks be to God, there are nearly everywhere; therefore I wish them always to remain in their place, unless the bishop wish to take them with him, or they be lent out anywhere, or any one make a copy from them.

translated by HENRY SWEET: *King Alfred's West-Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care* (E.E.T.S., 45, 50).

ALFRED: FROM THE TRANSLATION OF BOETHIUS *DE CONSOLATIONE PHILOSOPHIAE*

C. H. E. L. I. 99–101. Alfred's version of this treatise belongs to his middle life. 'His religious outlook had much in common with the gentle philosophy of the "last of the Romans,"' and the translation afforded him considerable opportunity for self-expression.' The italics indicate Alfred's additions.

(a) PROEM

King Alfred was the interpreter of this book, and turned it from book Latin into English, as it is now done. Now he set forth word by word, now sense from sense, as clearly and intelligently as he was able, in the various and manifold worldly cares that oft troubled him both in mind and in body. These cares are very hard for us to reckon, that in his days came upon the kingdoms to which he had succeeded, and yet when he had studied this book and turned it from Latin into English prose, he wrought it up once more into verse, as it is now done. And

now he prayeth and in God's name beseecheth every man that careth to read this book, to pray for him, and not to blame him if he understand it more rightly than he (Alfred) could. For every man must, according to the measure of his understanding and leisure, speak what he speaketh and do what he doeth.

(b) FABLE OF ORPHEUS

We must tell thee yet another from the fables of old. Once on a time it came to pass that a harp-player lived in the country called Thracia, which was in the kingdom of the Crecas (Greeks). The harper was so good, it was quite unheard of. His name was Orfeus, and he had a wife without her equal, named Eurudice. Now men came to say of the harper that he could play the harp so that the forest swayed, and the rocks quivered for the sweet sound, and wild beasts would run up and stand still as if they were tame, so still that men or hounds might come near them, and they fled not. The harper's wife died, men say, and her soul was taken to hell. Then the harpman became so sad that he could not live in the midst of other men, but was off to the forest, and sate upon the hills both day and night, weeping, and playing on his harp so that the woods trembled and the rivers stood still, and hart shunned not lion, nor hare hound, nor did any beast feel rage or fear towards any other for gladness of the music. And when it seemed to the harper that nothing in this world brought joy to him he thought he would seek out the gods of hell and essay to win them over with his harp, and pray them to give him back his wife. When he came thither, the hound of hell, men say, came towards him, whose name was Cerverus and who had three heads; and he began to welcome him with his tail, and play with him on account of his harp-playing. There was likewise there a most dreadful gateward whose name was Caron; he had also three heads, and was very, very old. Then the harper fell to beseeching him that he would shield him while he was in that place, and bring him back again unharmed. And he promised him to do so, being overjoyed at the rare music. Then he went on farther until he met the fell goddesses that men of the people call Parcae, saying that they know no respect for any man, but punish each according to his deeds; and they are said to rule each man's fate. And he began to implore their kindness; and they fell to weeping with him.

Again he went on, and all the dwellers in hell ran to meet him, and fetched him to their king; and all began to speak with him and join in his prayer. And the ever-moving wheel, that Ixion king of the Levitas (*Lapithae*) was bound to for his guilt, stood still for his harping, and King Tantalus, that was in this world greedy beyond measure, and whom that same sin of greed followed there, had rest, and the vulture, it is said, left off tearing the liver of King Ticcius (*Tityus*), whom he had thus been punishing. *And all the dwellers in hell had rest from their tortures whilst he was harping before the king.* Now when he had played a long, long time, the king of hell's folk cried out, saying, 'Let us give the good man his wife, for he hath won her with his harping.' Then he bade him be sure never to look back once he was on his way thence; if he looked back, he said, he should forfeit his wife. But love may hardly, nay, cannot be denied! Alas and well-a-day! Orpheus led his wife along with him, until he came to the border of light and darkness, and his wife was close behind. *He had but stepped into the light when he looked back towards his wife, and immediately she was lost to him.*

These fables teach every man that would flee from the darkness of hell and come to the light of the True Goodness that he should not look towards his old sins, so as again to commit them as fully as he once did. For whosoever with entire will turneth his mind back to the sins he hath left, and then doeth them and taketh full pleasure in them, and never after thinketh of forsaking them, that man shall lose all his former goodness, unless he repent.

translated by WALTER JOHN SEDGEFIELD: *King Alfred's Version of the Consolations of Boethius.*

(c) ALFRED'S CONCLUDING PRAYER

O Lord, Almighty God, Creator and Ruler of all things, I beseech Thee by Thy great mercy, and by the sign of Thy holy cross, and by the virginity of Saint Mary, and by the obedience of Saint Michael, and by the love of all Thy holy saints, and by their merits, that Thou wilt guide me better than I have deserved from Thee; direct me according to Thy will, and according to my soul's need, better than I myself can; establish my mind according to Thy will, and according to my soul's need; strengthen me against the temptations of the devil, put

far from me foul lust and all unrighteousness, and shield me from mine enemies, seen and unseen; and teach me to do Thy will, that I may inwardly love Thee above all things with a pure mind and a pure body; for Thou art my Creator and my Redeemer, my Help, my Comfort, my Trust, and my Hope. To Thee be praise and glory now and for ever, world without end. Amen.

translated by ELIZABETH D. HANSCOMBE: *Select Translations from Old English Prose* (Cook and Tinker).

ALFRED: OHTHERE'S FIRST VOYAGE

C. H. E. L. I. 93-96. ‘The *Historia adversus Paganos* of Paulus Orosius, a Spanish ecclesiastic, dates from the fifth century and was looked upon as a standard text book of universal history....Alfred’s interest in the work of Orosius lay chiefly on the historical and geographical sides....He aimed at giving to the English people a compendium of universal history and geography, handling his original with great freedom, introducing alterations and additions....The accounts of the celebrated voyages of Ohthere and Wulfstan inserted in the volume were taken down from hearsay.’

Ohthere told his lord, king Alfred, that he dwelt northmost of all Northmen. He said that he dwelt northward, on the land by the west sea. He said, however, that the land is very long thence to the north; but it is all waste [desert], save that in a few places, here and there, Finns reside,—for hunting in winter, and in summer for fishing in the sea. He said, that, at a certain time, he wished to find out how far the land lay right north; or whether any man dwelt to the north of the waste. Then he went right north near the land: he left, all the way, the waste land on the right, and the wide sea on the left, for three days. Then was he as far north as Whale-hunters ever go. He then went yet right north, as far as he could sail in the next three days. Then the land bent there right east, or the sea in on the land, he knew not whether; but he knew that he there waited for a western wind, or a little to the north, and sailed thence east near the land, as far as he could sail in four days. Then he must wait there for a right north wind, because the land bent there right south, or the sea in on the land, he knew not whether. Then sailed he thence right south, near the land, as far as he could sail in five days. There lay then a great river up into the land: they turned up into the river, because they durst not sail beyond it,

on account of hostility, for the land was all inhabited, on the other side of the river. He had not before met with any inhabited land, since he came from his own home, but the land was uninhabited all the way on his right, save by fishermen, fowlers and hunters, and they were all Finns; and there was always a wide sea on his left. The Biarmians had very well peopled their land, but they durst not come upon it: the land of the Terfinns was all waste, save where hunters, fishers or fowlers encamped.

The Biarmians told him many stories both about their own country and about the countries which were around them; but, he knew not what was true, because he did not see it himself. The Finns and the Biarmians, as it seemed to him, spoke nearly the same language. He chiefly went thither, in addition to the seeing of the country, on account of the horse-whales, [walruses], because they have very good bone in their teeth: of these teeth they brought some to the king; and their hides are very good for ship-ropes. This whale is much less than other whales: it is not longer than seven ells; but, in his own country, is the best whale-hunting: they are eight and forty ells long, and the largest fifty ells long; of these, he said, that he was one of six, who killed sixty in two days.

He [Ohthere] was a very wealthy man in those possessions in which their wealth consists, that is in the wilder animals. He had, moreover, when he came to the king, six hundred tame deer of his own breeding. They call these rein-deer: of these, six were decoy-deer, which are very valuable among Finns, because with them they take the wild-deer. He was amongst the first men in the land, though he had not more than twenty horned cattle, twenty sheep and twenty swine; and the little that he ploughed, he ploughed with horses. But their revenue is chiefly in the tribute, that the Finns pay them, which tribute is in skins of animals, feathers of birds, in whale-bone, and ship-ropes, which are made from the whale's hide, and from the seal's. Every one pays according to his means: the richest must pay fifteen skins of the marten, and five of the rein-deer, and one bear's skin, and forty bushels of feathers, and a bear or otter-skin kirtle, and two ship-ropes, each sixty ells long, one made from the whale's hide, and the other from the seal's.

He said that the country of Northmen was very long and very narrow. All that can be either pastured or ploughed lies by the

sea, and that, however, is in some places, very rocky; and, on the east, lie wild mountains along the inhabited land. In these mountains [wastes] Finns dwell; and the inhabited land is broadest eastward, and always narrower more northerly. Eastward it may be sixty miles broad, or a little broader, and midway thirty or broader; and northward, he said, where it was narrowest, that it might be three miles broad to the waste, and moreover, the waste, in some places, is so broad that a man may travel over it in two weeks; and in other places, so broad that a man may travel over it in six days.

translated by JOSEPH BOSWORTH:
King Alfred's Orosius in English.

THE OLD ENGLISH CHRONICLE YEARS 878-892

C. H. E. L. I. 104. In the brief records kept by monks of important events, 'Alfred perceived the nucleus for a larger survey of West Saxon history,' and the composite work known as the *Old English Chronicle* owes much to his inspiration. 'The Alfredian version comes down to 892 only, at which date the first hand in the MS ceases, and of this portion Alfred may be supposed to have acted as supervisor. From a historical point of view, the *Chronicle* was the first national continuous history of a western nation in its own language; from a literary point of view, it was the first great book in English prose.'

An. DCCC. LXXVIII. (DCCC. LXXIX.) In this year, at Midwinter, after Twelfth night, the [Danish] army stole itself away to Chippenham, and harried the West Saxons' land, and settled there, and drove many of the people over sea, and of the remainder the greater portion they harried, and the people submitted to them, save the king Ælfred, and he, with a little band, withdrew to the woods and moor-fastnesses. And in the same winter the brother of Ingvar and Hålfðán was in Wessex, in Devonshire, with twenty-three ships, and he was there slain, and with him eight hundred and forty men of his force. And there was the standard taken which they call the Raven. And the Easter after, Ælfred, with a little band, wrought a fortress at Æthelney, and from that work warred on the army, with that portion of the men of Somerset that was nearest. Then in the seventh week after Easter he rode to Ecgbryht's stone, on the east of Selwood, and there came to meet him all the Somersetshire men, and the

Wiltshire men, and that part of Hampshire which remained of it on this side of the sea; and they were rejoiced on seeing him; and one night after, he went from the camp to Iley, and one night after that to Ethandûn (Heddington?), and there fought against all the army, and put it to flight, and rode after it, as far as the works, and there sat fourteen nights. And then the army gave him hostages with great oaths, that they would depart from his kingdom; and also promised him that their king would receive baptism; and that they so fulfilled; and three weeks after, king Guthorm came to him, with thirty of the men who were most honourable in the army, at Aller, which is opposite to Athelney; and the king received him there at baptism; and his chrism-loosing was at Wedmore; and he was twelve nights with the king; and he largely gifted him and his companions with money.

An. DCCC. LXXIX. (DCCC. LXXX.) In this year the army went to Cirencester from Chippenham, and sat there one year. And in that year a body of vikings assembled, and sat down at Fulham on the Thames. And that same year the sun was eclipsed one hour of the day.

An. DCCC. LXXX. (DCCC. LXXXI.) In this year the army went from Cirencester to East Anglia, and occupied and divided the land. And in the same year the army, which had before sat down at Fulham, went over sea to Ghent in France, and sat there one year.

An. DCCC. LXXXI. (DCCC. LXXXII.) In this year the army went up into France, and the French fought against them; and there was the army horsed, after the fight.

An. DCCC. LXXXII. (DCCC. LXXXIII.) In this year the army went up along the Maese far into France, and there sat one year. And that same year king Ælfred went out to sea with ships, and fought against four ship-crews of Danish men, and took two of the ships, and the men were slain that were therein; and two ship-crews surrendered to him; and they were sorely fatigued and wounded before they surrendered.

An. DCCC. LXXXIII. (DCCC. LXXXIV.) In this year the army went up the Scheldt to Condé, and there sat one year. And Marinus the pope then sent 'lignum Domini' (of Christ's cross) to king Ælfred. And in the same year Sighelm and Æthelstân conveyed to Rome the alms which the king had vowed (to send) thither, and also to India to St Thomas, and to St Bartholomew,

when they sat down against the army at London; and there, God be thanked, their prayer was very successful, after that vow.

An. DCCC. LXXXIV. (DCCC. LXXXV.) In this year the army went up the Somme to Amiens, and there sat one year. In this year died the benevolent bishop Æthelwold¹.

An. DCCC. LXXXV. (DCCC. LXXXVI.) In this year the fore-mentioned army separated into two; one part (went) east, the other part to Rochester, and besieged the city, and wrought another fastness about themselves; but they, nevertheless, defended the city until king Ælfred came without with his force. Then the army went to their ships, and abandoned the fastness; and they were there deprived of their horses, and forthwith, in the same summer, withdrew over sea. And the same year king Ælfred sent a naval force from Kent to East Anglia. As soon as they came to the mouth of the Stour, then met them sixteen ships of vikings, and they fought against them, and captured all the ships, and slew the men. When they were returning homeward with the booty, a great naval force of vikings met them, and then fought against them on the same day, and the Danish gained the victory. In the same year, before midwinter, Carloman, king of the Franks, died, and a wild boar killed him; and one year before his brother died: he also had the western kingdom; and they were both sons of Lewis, who also had the western kingdom, and died in the year when the sun was eclipsed, who was son of Charles², whose daughter Æthelwulf, king of the West Saxons, had for his queen. And in the same year a large naval force assembled among the Old-Saxons; and there was a great fight twice in that year, and the Saxons had the victory; and there were Frisians with them. In the same year Charles³ succeeded to the western kingdom, and to all the kingdom on this side of the Mediterranean sea, and beyond this sea, as his great-grandfather had it, excepting the Lidwiccas. Charles was son of Lewis, Lewis was brother of Charles, who was father of Judith, whom king Æthelwulf had; and they were sons of Lewis; Lewis was son of the old Charles, Charles was son of Pepin. And in the same year the good pope Marinus died, who freed the Angle race's school, at the prayer of Ælfred, king of the West Saxons: and he sent him great gifts, and part of the

¹ of Winton.

² the Bald.

³ the Fat.

rood on which Christ suffered. And in the same year the army in East Anglia brake peace with king Ælfred.

An. DCCC.LXXXVI. (DCCC.LXXXVII.) In this year the army again went west, which had before landed in the east, and then up the Seine, and there took winter-quarters at the city of Paris. In the same year king Ælfred restored London; and all the Angle-race turned to him that were not in the bondage of the Danish men; and he then committed the burgh to the keeping of the alderman Æthered.

An. DCCC.LXXXVII. (DCCC.LXXXVIII.) In this year the army went up through the bridge at Paris; and then up along the Seine as far as the Marne, and then up on the Marne as far as Chezy, and then sat there, and in the Yonne, two winters in the two places. And in the same year Charles¹, king of the Franks, died; and six weeks before he died Arnulf, his brother's son, bereft him of the kingdom. And then was the realm divided into five; and five kings thereto hallowed; that was however, with the consent of Arnulf; and they said that they would hold it from his hand, because none of them on the paternal side was born thereto, save him alone. Arnulf then dwelt in the land east of the Rhine, and Rodolf then obtained the middle kingdom, and Eudes the western portion, and Berenger and Wido the Lombards' land and the lands on that side of the mountain; and they held that in great hostility, and fought two great battles, and oft and frequently ravaged the land, and repeatedly drove out each other. And the same year that the army went forth up over the bridge at Paris the alderman Æthelhelm conveyed the alms of the West Saxons and of king Ælfred to Rome.

An. DCCC.LXXXVIII. (DCCC.LXXXIX.) In this year the alderman Becca conveyed the alms of the West Saxons and of king Ælfred to Rome. And queen Æthelswith, who was king Ælfred's sister, died on the way to Rome, and her body lies at Pavia. And in the same year archbishop Æthelred of Canterbury and the alderman Æthelwold died in one month.

An. DCCC.LXXXIX. (DCCC.XC.) In this year there was no journey to Rome, except that king Ælfred sent two couriers with letters.

An. DCCC.XC. (DCCC.XCI.) In this year the abbot Beornhelm conveyed the alms of the West Saxons and of king Ælfred to Rome. And Guthorm, the Northern king, died, whose baptismal name was Æthelstân; he was king Ælfred's godson, and he

¹ the Fat.

abode in East Anglia, and first occupied that land. And in the same year the army went from the Seine to St Lô, which is between the Bretons and the Franks; and the Bretons fought against them, and had the victory, and drove them out into a river, and drowned many of them. In this year Plegemund was chosen of God and of all the people to the archbishopric of Canterbury.

An. DCCC.XCI. (DCCC.XCII.) In this year the army went east, and king Arnulf, with the East Franks, and Saxons, and Bavarians, fought against the mounted force before the ships came, and put it to flight. And three Scots came to king Ælfred in a boat without any oars, from Ireland, whence they had stolen away, because they desired, for love of God, to be in a state of pilgrimage, they recked not where. The boat in which they came was wrought of two hides and a half, and they took with them food sufficient for seven nights; and on the seventh night they came to land in Cornwall, and then went straightways to king Ælfred. Thus they were named: Dubslane, and Macbethu, and Maelinnum. And Swifneh, the best teacher that was among the Scots, died.

An. DCCC.XCII. And in the same year after Easter, about the Rogations (May 29th) or earlier, appeared the star which in Book-Latin is called *cometa*. Some men say in English, that it is a long-haired (feaxed) star, because there stands a long ray from it, sometimes on one side, sometimes on each side.

translated by BENJAMIN THORPE: *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Rolls Series, 23).

KING ALFRED'S WILL

I, King Alfred, by the grace of God, and with the advice of Archbishop Aethelred, and the cognisance of all the West Saxon council, have been deliberating about the good of my soul, and about the inheritance which God and my ancestors granted to me, and about the inheritance which my father, King Aethelwulf, bequeathed to us three brothers, to Aethelbald, Aethelred and myself; [with the proviso that] whichever of us lived longest was to succeed to everything. But it came to pass that Aethelbald died; and Aethelred and I, with the cognisance of all the West Saxon council, gave our share in trust to our kinsman, King Aethelberht, on condition that he restored it to us in the state

in which it was when we entrusted it to him; and he did so, [leaving to us] the inheritance [belonging to us jointly], and what he had acquired by the use of our share, and what he had himself acquired.

When it came to pass that Aethelred became king, I prayed him, in the presence of the whole of our council, that the property should be divided between us, and that he would give me my share. Then he told me that he could not easily divide it, for he had many times already attempted to do so (?); and he added that there was no one to whom he would rather give it after his time than to me—both the property of which he was in possession, but which by right belonged to both of us, and also the property which he had himself acquired. And with this I was at that time well content. But it came to pass that we were all harassed with the heathen invasion; then we discussed our children's future—how they would need some maintenance, whatever might happen to us through these disasters. When we were assembled at Swanborough (?), we agreed, with the cognisance of the West Saxon council, that whichever of us survived the other, was to give to the other's children the lands which we had ourselves acquired, and the lands which King Aethelwulf gave us in the lifetime of Aethelbald, excepting those which he had settled on us three brothers jointly. And we both gave each other security, that whichever of us lived the longer, should succeed both to lands and to valuables and to all his estate, with the exception of that portion which either had bequeathed to his children.

But it came to pass that King Aethelred died. Then no one informed me that any testament had been made or witnessed, beside the one to which we had formerly, before witnesses, agreed. When now we heard of many suits about the inheritance, I produced King Aethelwulf's will in our assembly at *Langan-dene*, and it was read before all the West Saxon council. When it was read, I prayed them all for love of me—offering them surety that I would never bear a grudge against any of them on account of any conscientious expression of opinion—that none of them for love or fear of me should hesitate to declare what was the national law in such a case, lest any man should say that I had wronged my kinsfolk, whether of the older or younger generation. Then they all duly declared and stated that they could not devise a more just title, nor find one in the will. 'Now

everything therein has passed into thy possession, do thou bequeath and give it to kinsman or to stranger, whichever is most agreeable to thee.' And they all gave me their surety and their sign-manual, that no man, so long as they lived, should ever make any change in the arrangements which I should decide upon at my last day.

[Here follow directions concerning the disposal of estates and residences.]

And to my two sons one thousand pounds, five hundred pounds to each. And to my eldest daughter and to the second and to the youngest and to Ealhswith, four hundred pounds to the four of them, one hundred pounds to each. And to each of my earls one hundred mancuses; and the same also to Aethelhelm, Aethelwold and Osferth; and to Earl Aethelred a sword worth one hundred mancuses. And to the men who serve me, to whom I have made gifts this Easter, two hundred pounds are to be given and divided between them, to each as much as will fall to him according to the proportion in which I have just made my distribution. And one hundred mancuses to the archbishop and to Bishop Esne and to Bishop Werferth and to the Bishop of Sherborne. Likewise, two hundred pounds are to be distributed for me and for my father and for the friends for whom he interceded and I intercede—fifty to priests throughout my realm, fifty to poor servants of God, fifty to the distressed poor, fifty to the church in which I shall rest. I do not know for certain whether there is as much money as this, nor do I know whether there is more, but I think that there is. If there is more, it is to be shared between all those to whom I have bequeathed money; and I desire that my earls and officials should all be present at the time (?), and divide it between them in the manner aforesaid.

Now I had made other arrangements in writing concerning my inheritance, when I had more money and more kinsmen, and had committed the documents to many men, with whose cognisance they had been drawn up. I have now burnt the old ones which I could hear of. If any of these is found, it shall be of no value, since these are the arrangements which I now desire should stand, with God's help....

translated by F. E. HARMER:
Select English Historical Documents.

FROM ALFRED TO THE CONQUEST

AETHELWOLD: THE BENEDICTINE RULE

C. H. E. L. I. 113-114. 'With the accession of Edgar (959)...no fewer than forty monasteries for men were founded or restored....The inhabitants... naturally required instruction in the Benedictine rule, and to this necessity is due the version of the rule which Aethelwold drew up....Edgar further entrusted Aethelwold with the task of translating the *Rule* into English.' Aethelwold (908?-984), a vigorous reformer, became Bishop of Winchester in 963.

(a) OF DAILY HANDICRAFT

Idleness is the enemy of the soul; therefore the brethren should be occupied at certain times in working with their hands, and at certain other hours in godly reading. Wherefore we think fit thus to dispose both these times. From Easter to the first of October let them go forth early and labour at necessary work from Prime until almost the fourth hour; and from the fourth until about the sixth let them busy themselves with reading....From the first of October until the beginning of Lent, let them read a full hour until the second hour; then let them say Tierce, and let all work until None at the work enjoined them....After refection let them busy themselves with their reading, or with the Psalms. Again, in Lententide, let them read from early morn to full Tierce, and then busy themselves until the full tenth hour with whatsoever work has been enjoined upon them. And in these days of Lent let each take one volume for himself from the library, and let him read that book fully, from beginning to end, [during the year]. These volumes must be given out on the first day of Lent. But, above all, let one or two seniors be deputed to go round the monastery at those hours which are assigned for reading, lest perchance some slothful brother be found who spends his time in idleness or in talk, and who is not intent upon his reading, thus wasting not only his own time but that of others also. If

such a one be found (though God forbid that there should be such!) let him be admonished once and twice; and, if he amend not then, let him be subjected to regular discipline [i.e. to corporal punishment], that the rest may fear to follow in his steps. On Sundays let them spend their time in reading, except those who are deputed for the various services. But if any monk be so negligent and idle that he will not or cannot meditate or read, let some work be enjoined upon him, that he be not wholly unoccupied.

from *Social Life in Britain from the Conquest to the Reformation* by G. G. COULTON.

(b) ARTIFICERS IN A MONASTERY

If there are artificers in a monastery, they are to ply their arts with all humility and reverence, if so the abbot allow. But if any of them grows vain on account of his knowledge of the art, as if he were conferring a benefit upon the monastery, he shall be removed from the practice of his art, and shall not again resume it unless he humble himself, and again receive a command to that effect from the abbot. If anything made by the artisans is to be sold, let them look well to it that those through whose hands the articles pass commit no fraud upon the monastery. Let them be mindful of Ananias and Sapphira, lest the death which these suffered in their bodies, they, and all who practise deception with reference to the goods of the monastery, should experience in their souls. Let not the evil of avarice creep into the price for which articles are sold, but on the contrary let the price be always a little lower than that charged by secular persons, that in all things God may be glorified.

translated by ALBERT S. COOK: *Select Translations from Old English Prose* (Cook and Tinker).

AELFRIC: COLLOQUY

C. H. E. L. i. 114, 116–128. The Latin *Colloquy* of Aelfric (955?–1020?) ‘was intended to instruct the novices at Winchester in the daily speech of the monastery....Aelfric was not only the greatest prose writer, he was also the most distinguished English-writing theologian in his own time.’ In MS Cott. Tib. A III, from which the present text is derived, there is an Old English gloss, certainly not the work of Aelfric. The dialogue was composed by Aelfric and received many additions by Aelfric Bata, his pupil.

Boys. Master, we children ask you to teach us to speak correctly, for we are unlearned and speak corruptly.

Master. What do you want to say?

B. What do we care what we say so long as we speak correctly and say what is useful, not old-womanish or improper?

M. Will you be flogged while learning?

B. We would rather be flogged while learning than remain ignorant; but we know that you will be kind to us and not flog us unless you are obliged.

M. I ask you what you were saying to me. What work have you?

1st Boy. I am a professed monk and I sing seven times a day with the brethren and I am busy with reading and singing; and meanwhile I want to learn to speak Latin.

M. What do these companions of yours know?

1st Boy. Some are ploughmen, others shepherds, some are cowherds, some too are hunters, some are fishermen, some hawkers, some merchants, some shoemakers, some salters, some bakers of the place.

M. What do you say, ploughboy, how do you do your work?

P. Oh, sir, I work very hard. I go out at dawn to drive the oxen to the field, and yoke them to the plough; however hard the winter I dare not stay at home for fear of my master; and having yoked the oxen and made the plough-share and coulter fast to the plough, every day I have to plough a whole acre or more.

M. Have you anyone with you?

P. I have a boy to drive the oxen with the goad, and he is now hoarse with cold and shouting.

M. What more do you do in the day?

P. A great deal more. I have to fill the oxen’s bins with hay, and give them water, and carry the dung outside.

M. Oh, it is hard work.

P. Yes, it is hard work, because I am not free.

[So they go through all the other occupations. At the end there is a discussion who does the best work and which is the most useful, and a counsellor is called in to decide the question. He decides that divine service comes first, but among secular crafts agriculture, because it feeds all. Then the smith and the wheelwright point out that the ploughman is no use without the plough which they make.]

The counsellor says: Oh, all you good fellows and good workers, let us end this dispute and have peace and harmony among us, and let each help the other by his craft, and let us all meet at the ploughman's, where we find food for ourselves and fodder for our horses. And this is the advice I give all workmen, that each of them should do his work as well as he can, as the man who neglects his work is dismissed from his work. Whether you are a priest or a monk, a layman or a soldier, apply yourself to that, and be what you are, as it is a great loss and shame for a man not to be what he is and what he ought to be.

M. Now, children, how do you like this speech?

B. We like it very much, but what you say is too deep for us, and is beyond our age. But talk to us in a way we can follow so that we may understand what you are talking about.

M. Well, I ask you why you are learning so diligently?

B. Because we do not want to be like beasts, who know nothing but grass and water.

[The master then goes off into a disquisition whether they want to be worldly wise, full of craft, or otherwise. They complain again that he is too deep for them.]

But talk to us so that we can understand, not so profoundly.

M. Well, I will do what you ask. You, boy, what did you do to-day?

B. I did many things. At night when I heard the bell, I got out of bed and went to church and sang the nocturne with the brethren. Then we sang the martyrology and lauds; after that, prime and the seven psalms with litanies and first mass; next tierce, and did the mass of the day; after that we sang sext, and ate and drank and slept; and then we got up again and sang nones, and now here we are before you ready to listen to what you tell us.

M. When will you sing vespers or compline?
B. When it's time.
M. Were you flogged to-day?
B. I was not, because I was very careful.
M. And how about the others?
B. Why do you ask me that? I daren't tell you our secrets.
 Each one knows whether he was flogged or not.
M. Where do you sleep?
B. In the dormitory with the brethren.
M. Who calls you to nocturnes?
B. Sometimes I hear the bell, and get up; sometimes my master wakes me with a ground-ash.
M. All you good children and clever scholars, your teacher exhorts you to keep the commandments of God, and behave properly everywhere. Walk quietly when you hear the church bells and go into church, and bow to the holy altars, and stand quietly and sing in unison, and ask pardon for your sins, and go out again without playing, to the cloister or to school.

WRIGHT'S *Anglo-Saxon Vocabularies*;
 translated by ARTHUR F. LEACH in
Educational Charters and Documents.

AELFRIC: *THE LIFE OF ST OSWALD*

C. H. E. L. I. 116 ff. The homilies, especially the third series, *The Lives*, or *Passions*, of the Saints (c. 996 or 997) 'exhibit the style of Aelfric in its maturity ... they provide many valuable side-lights on contemporary manners, and on the life of the homilist himself.'

Oswald began to enquire concerning the will of God as soon as he obtained sovereignty, and desired to convert his people to the faith and to the living God. Then he sent to Scotland where the faith was then, and prayed the chief men that they would grant his requests, and send him some teacher who might allure his people to God, and this was granted him. Then they sent straightway to the blessed king a certain venerable bishop, named Aidan. He was a very famous man in the monastic way of life, and he had cast away all worldly cares from his heart, desiring nothing but God's will. Whatever came to him of the king's gifts, or of those of rich men, that he quickly distributed to

the poor and needy with benevolent mind. Lo then! Oswald the king rejoiced at his coming, and honourably received him as a benefit to his people, that their faith might be turned again to God from the apostasy to which they had been turned. It befell then that this believing king explained to his counsellors in their own language the bishop's preaching with glad mind, and was his interpreter, because he knew Irish well, and bishop Aidan could not as yet turn his speech into the Northumbrian dialect quickly enough. The bishop then went preaching faith and baptism throughout all Northumbria, and converted the people to God's faith, and he ever set them a good example by his works, and himself so lived as he taught others. He loved self-restraint and holy reading, and zealously drew on young men with knowledge, so that all his companions, who went with him, had to learn the Psalms or some reading, whithersoever they went, preaching to the people. He would seldom ride, but travelled on his feet, and lived as a monk among the laity with much discretion and true virtues. King Oswald became very charitable and humble in manners, and in all things bountiful, and they reared churches everywhere in his kingdom, and monastic foundations with great zeal.

It happened upon a certain occasion that they sat together, Oswald and Aidan, on the holy Easter Day; then they bare to the king the royal meats on a silver dish. And anon there came in one of the king's thegns who had charge of his alms, and said that many poor men were sitting in the streets, come from all quarters to the king's alms-giving. Then the king immediately sent to the poor the silver dish, victuals and all, and bade men cut the dish in pieces and give it to the poor, to each of them his portion, and they then did so. Then the noble bishop Aidan took the king's right hand with much joy, and cried out with faith, thus saying to him; 'May this blessed right hand never rot in corruption.' And it happened to him, even as Aidan prayed for him, that his right hand is sound until this day. Then Oswald's kingdom became greatly enlarged, so that four peoples received him as lord, Picts, Britons, Scots, and Angles, even as the Almighty God united them for the purpose, because of Oswald's merits, who ever honoured Him. He completed in York the noble minster which his kinsman Edwin had before begun, and laboured for the heavenly kingdom with continual

prayers, much more than he cared how he might preserve the transitory dignities in the world, which he little loved. He would very often pray after matins, and stand in the church apart in prayer from the time of sun-rise with great fervour; and wheresoever he was he ever worshipped God with the palms of his hands uplifted heavenward.

translated by W. W. SKEAT: *Aelfric's Lives of the Saints* (E.E.T.S., 76, 82, 94, 114).

WULFSTAN: ADDRESS TO THE ENGLISH

C. H. E. L. I. 129–131. Wulfstan, who died in 1023, was Archbishop of York during the troublous time of Aethelred. The most powerful of his writings is the following, entitled *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos quando Dani maxime persecuti sunt eos, quod fuit in die Aethelredi regis.*

Dearly beloved, understand the truth: this world is in haste, and drawing nigh the end. Hence is the later in the world ever the worse, so that things must needs wax very evil before the coming of Antichrist. Likewise, consider earnestly that for these many years the devil has led this people too widely astray; that men have held little faith towards one another, for all their fair speaking; that injustice has too much prevailed in the land; and that they have been few who thought upon a remedy as diligently as they ought. Daily has evil been heaped upon evil, and men have worked iniquity and manifold unrighteousness far too generally throughout this whole nation.

On account of these things we have suffered many losses and indignities; and if we are to expect any relief, we must deserve it better at God's hands than we have done hitherto. For with great deserts have we earned the misery which lies over us; and with exceeding great deserts we must obtain the cure from God, if our condition is henceforth to become better. We know very well that a wide breach demands much mending, and a great fire abundant water if the fire is to be in any wise quenched. The necessity is urgent upon every man henceforth to keep God's law with diligence, and fulfil God's commandments with uprightness.

Among the heathen, no man dares keep back either little or much of that which is ordained for the worship of idols; but we too often everywhere withhold the dues of God. Among the heathen, men dare not diminish any of those things, within or without, which are brought to the idols and appointed for a sacrifice; but we have clean despoiled the inward and the outward of God's house. Moreover, the servants of God are everywhere deprived of reverence and the right of giving sanctuary; but the servants of idols among the heathen, men dare in no manner offend, as men now too generally offend the servants of God in places where Christians ought to keep God's law and afford protection to His servants.

I tell you the truth—a remedy must be found. Too long have the laws of God been declining on every side among this people; the laws of the nation have lapsed unduly; sanctuaries lie too little protected; and the houses of God are clean despoiled of their ancient tribute, and stripped within of all things seemly. Men of religion have this long time been greatly despised; widows wrongfully forced to marry; poor and afflicted men betrayed and grievously ensnared, and sold undeservedly far away from this country, into the power of strangers; children in the cradle enslaved, with bitter injustice, on pretence of petty theft; freeman's right wrested away, thrall-right restricted, alms-right greatly diminished. To sum up most briefly, the laws of God are hated, and instruction despised. For this we all suffer many indignities, as should be evident to every one; and though men deem it not, the loss will be common to all this nation, unless God shall save.

Surely it is plain and manifest, in the case of all of us, that we have hitherto offended more than we amended; and for this cause our nation has endured many inroads. This long time nothing has thriven at home or abroad, but on every hand have been frequent ravaging and famine, burning and bloodshed, robbery and slaughter, plague and pestilence, murrain and disease. Slander and malice and rapine of robbers have sorely afflicted us; tempests oftentimes have blighted our harvests: because, it would seem, for these many years this land has witnessed manifold iniquities and unstable faith between men everywhere. Many a time has kinsman protected his kinsman no more than a stranger, nor father his son, nor, at times, son his

own father, nor one brother the other. No one of us has directed his life as he ought, neither those in orders according to the rules, nor laymen according to the law. No man has purposed toward his neighbour so uprightly as he ought, but wellnigh every one of us has betrayed and injured his fellow in word and deed.

How wickedly has nearly every one attacked his neighbour with shameful calumnies, and worse if he might! Here in our land are great breaches of faith toward God and man; and many among us are traitors to their lords in divers fashions. Worst of all treasons in the world it is that a man should betray the soul of his lord; and there is also another very great treason in the world, that a man should plot against his lord's life, or drive him living out of the country; and both these have been wrought in this land. Edward men plotted against, and afterward murdered, and then burned; and Æthelred they drove from his home. Too many sponsors and godchildren have been slain throughout this nation; too many holy places far and wide have perished, because in the past certain men have been lodged there, such as ought not to have been if reverence were to be shown the sanctuary of God; too many Christian folk have been commonly sold into slavery. Ye may believe that all this is hateful to God.

Yet more: we know too well where the wretched thing has come to pass that a father has sold his son for a price, or a son his mother and brothers into the power of strangers. Whoever will may understand that all these are monstrous and terrible deeds; and still worse and more manifold afflict this nation. Many are forsown and liars; pledges are broken commonly; and it is plain in this land that the wrath of God lies bitterly upon us. He that can, let him understand.

Alas, can greater shame befall any man, by God's anger, than often befalls us for our just deserts—that if a thrall escape from his lord, and forsake Christendom to go over to the Danes, and it come about afterward that thane and thrall meet in battle, then the thane, if he be foully slain by the thrall, must lie without any wergild for his kinsmen; but if the thane foully slay the thrall whom he once owned, he must pay wergild as for a thane. Degrading laws and shameful tribute are wonted with us, because of God's anger, as whoever is able may understand; and a host of calamities continually attack this nation.

This long time nothing has thriven at home or abroad, but

harrying and hatred have been constant on every hand. The English have been long without victory and too sorely dismayed, by reason of the wrath of God. The sea-robbers, by God's permission, have been so strong that one of them will often put to flight ten of us in battle—sometimes less, sometimes more—and all because of our sins. Often ten or twelve of them, one after another, will insult and shamefully abuse the wife of a thane, or perhaps his daughter or kinswoman, he meanwhile looking on who thought himself proud and powerful and good enough before that came to pass. Often a thrall puts in bonds the thane that was his former lord, and makes him to be a thrall, by reason of God's anger. Alas for the misery, alas for the dishonour among the nations, which the English now endure; and all because of the wrath of our God! Often two or three vikings will drive the multitude of Christian men from sea to sea, out through the provinces enslaved together, to our common disgrace, if we would understand rightly in aught. Yet for all the frequent reproach that we endure, we return honour to them that abuse us. We continually reward them, and they daily oppress us. They harry and smite, bind and insult, spoil and raven, and carry away on shipboard; and lo, what in all these disorders is plain and manifest save the wrath of God upon this nation?

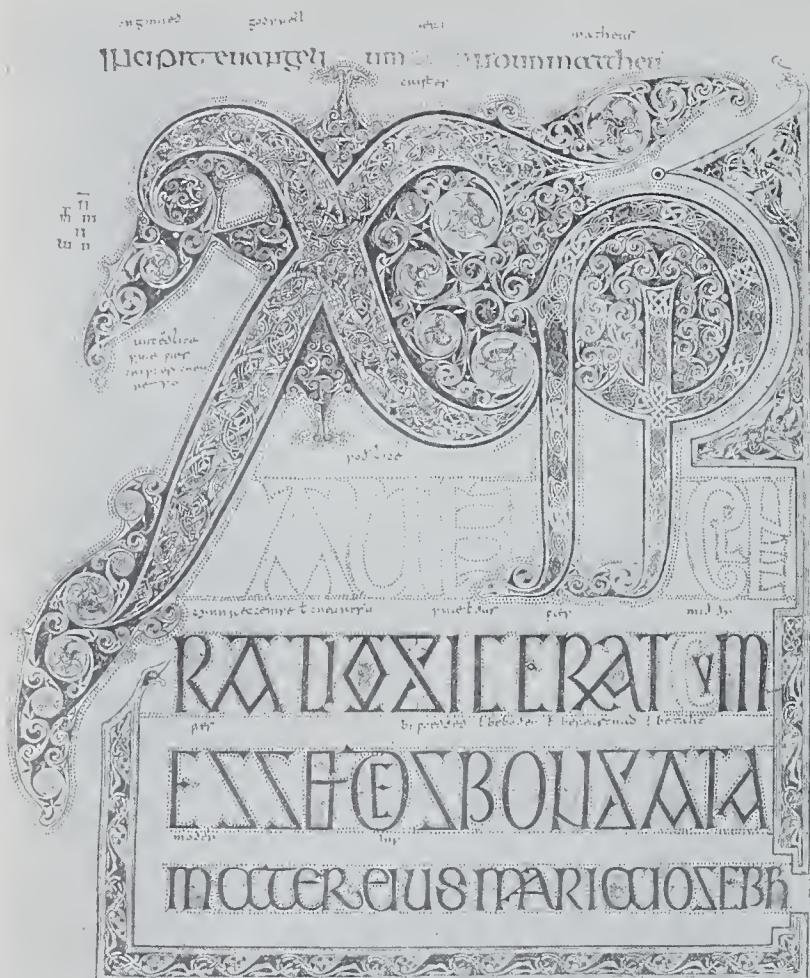
Nor is it any wonder if we are miserable, because we know very well that for these many years men have seldom recked what they wrought, in word or in deed. This our religion, as it seems, has been greatly sinned against by manifold sins and multiplied transgressions: by deeds fell and foul, by covetousness and greed, by theft and robbery, by wrongful selling of men into slavery, by heathen practices, by treasons and plots, by violations of law, by seditions, by attacks of kinsman on kinsman, by manslaughter, by injuries of holy men, by adulteries, incests, and divers fornications. Thereto, as we said before, by violated oaths and broken pledges, and various treacheries far and wide, more than ought to be are ruined and forsaken. Breaches of festivals are commonly committed. There are in this land all too many adversaries of God, malignant persecutors of the Church, and cruel tyrants in overgreat number; proud scorner of divine law and Christian practice, and foolish mockers, most often of those things that most certainly and rightfully belong to the law of

God. Thereby has grown up the common evil wont, that men are ashamed of good deeds rather than of evil, because too often men contemn good deeds with derision, and overmuch revile God-fearing men; and most men despise and greet with too frequent insult such as love righteousness and have in any measure the fear of God. Because men do thus, despising all that they ought to glorify, and hating what they ought to love, they pervert all too many to evil thoughts and acts, so that they are not ashamed to sin greatly, and altogether offend against God Himself; yet because of empty words of abuse they are ashamed to amend their misdeeds, as the books teach: like fools, who, for their infirmity of pride, will not save themselves until the time comes when they cannot though they would.

But, oh, in God's name, let us do as is needful for us—save ourselves as we may by utmost diligence, lest we perish all of us together! Let us do as behoves us, turn toward the right, and in some measure forsake the evil, and earnestly amend those things wherein we aforetime offended. Let us love God and follow God's laws, and perform with eagerness that which we promised when we received baptism, or those promised who were our sponsors in baptism; and let us rightly direct both words and works, and carefully cleanse our hearts, and observe with heed oaths and pledges, and have some faith amongst us, free from wicked practices. Let us often meditate upon the Great Judgment whither we all are bound, and save ourselves with zeal from the raging fire of hell-torment, and secure for ourselves the glory and gladness which God has prepared for such as work His will upon earth. May God help us. Amen.

translated by ELIZABETH W. MANWARING: *Select Translations from Old English Prose* (Cook and Tinker).

PLATE V



THE LINDISFARNE GOSPELS

DEDICATION OF THE LINDISFARNE GOSPELS

C. H. E. L. I. 132. ‘There were composed, during the tenth century, three English versions of the Gospels, known as the Lindisfarne, Rushworth and West Saxon glosses. The Latin text of the Lindisfarne Gospels, contained in a magnificent manuscript, adorned with beautiful illuminations, was written about the year 700; and it was not till at least two hundred and fifty years later...that the interlinear North Northumbrian gloss was added by Aldred, a priest.’ This gloss is ‘our most valuable authority for the Northumbrian dialect of the middle of the tenth century.’ The manuscript is in the British Museum (Cott. Nero D iv)—one of the nation’s greatest treasures.

(I) Thou Living God, be Thou mindful of Eadfrith, Aethelwald, Billfrith and Aldred peccatorem: these four have, with God’s help, been engaged upon this book.

(II) Eadfrith, Bishop of Lindisfarne, wrote this book, at the first, in honour of God and St Cuthbert and all the saints in common who are on the island. And Aethelwald, Bishop of Lindisfarne, bound it on the outside and covered (?) it, as he was well able to do. And Billfrith, the anchorite, wrought the ornaments upon the outside and adorned it, this unalloyed metal gilded over, with gold and gems and also with silver (?). And Aldred, presbyter indignus et miserrimus, with the help of God and St Cuthbert, wrote an English gloss above, and obtained for himself a home¹ with the three parts; [he glossed] Matthew’s part for God and St Cuthbert, Mark’s part for the bishop, and Luke’s for the community, paying, in addition, eight ‘ores’ of silver for his admission (?). And St John’s part [he glossed] for himself, namely, for the good of his soul, and has offered to God and St Cuthbert four ‘ores’ of silver besides; that he may receive admission in Heaven through God’s mercy, and have happiness and peace upon earth, promotion and honour, wisdom and prudence, through the merits of St Cuthbert. Eadfrith, Aethelwald, Billfrith, Aldred hoc evangeliarium Deo et Cuthberhto contruxerunt vel ornaverunt.

translated by F. E. HARMER: *Select English Historical Documents of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries.*

¹ In the monastery.

THE BATTLE OF BRUNANBURH

C. H. E. L. I. 136–141. The first of certain poems in the *Old English Chronicle* is that which, under the date 937, celebrates the victory won at Brunanburh by Aethelstan. The lines read downwards.

Now Æthelstan King,
Of Earls the Lord,
To warriors the ring-giver,
And his brother eke,
Eadmund Ætheling,
Eld-long glory
Won in the fight
With the sword's edge
By Brunanburh.
The boardwall they clave,
And hewed the war-linden,
With hammer's leavings,
Offspring of Eadward,
As to them kindly was
From their forefathers,
That they in fight oft
With every foeman
Their land should guard,
Their hoard and homes.
The foemen cringed,
The Scottish people,
And the ship-floaters
Death-doomed fell.
The field streamed
With warriors' sweat,
Since the Sun up
At morning-tide,
The glorious star,
Glode over grounds,
God's candle bright,
The everlasting Lord's,
Till the noble shape
Sank to her settle.
Here lay warriors many

By javelins pierced,
Northern men
Over shield shot,
So Scottish eke,
Weary war-sated.
And West-Saxons forth,
The life-long day,
In warlike bands,
On the footsteps lay
Of the loathed people.
Hewed they the flyers
Behind mightily
With swords mill-sharp.
Nor did Mercians shrink from
The hard handplay
With none of heroes,
That with Anlaf
Over the ocean
On the ships' bosom
The land sought.
Doomed to the fight,
Five there lay
On the fightstead
Kings young,
By swords laid to sleep;
So seven eke
Earls of Anlaf,
Countless fighting men,
Fleetmen and Scots.
There put to flight was
The Northmen's chieftain,
By need driven
To the ship's prow
With a little band.

Crowded he his bark afloat,
 The King out got him
 On the fallow flood,
 His life delivered.
 So there eke the old one
 In flight came
 To his kith northward,
 Constantinus,
 Hoary war-man.
 Boast he might not
 Of the swords' meeting;
 He was of kinsmen shorn,
 Of friends bereaved,
 On the folkstead
 Slain in the battle,
 And his son left he,
 On the slaughter-place,
 With wounds ground down,
 Young in warfare.
 Vaunt him might not
 The warrior with grey hair,
 Of the bills' clashing,
 That old deceiver.
 Nor Anlaf the mo,
 With their hosts' remnants;
 Laugh they might not
 That in the war-work
 Better were they
 On the fightstead
 In the banners' joining,
 In the spears' meeting,
 In the men's gathering,
 In the weapons' clashing,
 Where on the deathfield
 They then with Edward's
 Dffspring played.
 Went forth the Northmen
 n their nailed barks,
 The darts' bloody leaving,

On the roaring sea,
 Over deep water,
 Dublin to seek
 And once more Ireland,
 Ashamed in mood.
 So too the brethren,
 Both together,
 King and Ætheling,
 Their kith sought,
 The West-Saxons' land,
 In the war rejoicing.
 Left they behind them
 Corpses to feast on
 With sallow coat,
 Both the swart raven
 With horned nib,
 And him of dusky coat
 The erne behind white;
 Carcases to eat;
 The greedy war-hawk,
 And that grey deer,
 The wolf of the weald.
 Never was slaughter more
 In this island
 Afore yet
 Of folk o'erthrown
 Before this
 With the sword's edge,
 As to us say books,
 Men of old wisdom,
 Sith from east hither
 Angles and Saxons
 Up became.
 Over the broad sea
 Britain they sought;
 The haughty war-smiths
 The Welsh overcame,
 Earls for glory eager,
 A home they gat them.

translated by EDWARD A. FREEMAN: *Old English History for Children.*

JUDITH

C. H. E. L. I. 141–143. The fine fragment known as *Judith* is an epic poem of which only some 350 lines (canto ix in part, cantos x, xi, xii) survive. Its date and authorship are unknown. If, as some suppose, ‘it was written to commemorate the valiant deeds of Aethelflaed, the Lady of Mercia...it was probably written about 918.’ Lines 1–121 are here given (Cott. Vitell. A xv—in which it follows *Beowulf*).

Large is the face of our world, but she loosed not trust in His gifts,
 And sure was the sheltering grace of His hand, in her sharpest call
 To the Prince, who presides, far-famed, in the height, to protect her now
 From the worst of the Fear; and the Lord of His creatures willed her the boon
 For her fullness of faith in the glorious omnipotent Father enskied.
 And the heart grew fain, as I heard, within Holofernes the king,
 And he sent forth a bidding to wine, a banquet of bravery measureless,
 For all the eldest of thanes in the orders of shielded fighters,
 And the chiefs of the folk came quick to that mighty captain of theirs.
 And fourth was the day since the fairly-radiant Damsel had sought him, the deep-souled Judith;
 And they fared to the feast, his fellows in sorrow,
 And with lust of the wine-cup uplifted was every Breast of the warrior in battle-mail.
 And they bore down the benches the beakers lofty,
 Full cups and flagons for feasting in hall;
 And the soldiers seized them, the strong men in bucklers,
 Who were sealed—and their sovereign saw not—to death;
 And the giver of gold was gay with the revel,
 Holofernes, the fear and the friend of his earls,
 And he laughed aloud, and hallooed and shouted
 In fierceness of mood, and far the tempestuous Clamour was caught by the children of mortal,
 As mad with the mead-cup he monished them often
 To bear themselves bravely at board and be men.

Curst was his soul, and his company doughty he
Drowned in their drink while the daylight held,
And he whelmed them in wine, the warriors all,
Till they lay at the last like dead men stricken, in languor lapped,
With good things gorged by their valorous giver of treasure.
And he saw they were served as they sat in the feast-hall
Till dusk had descended nigh on the world.
And he bade them, that soul of all sins commingled,
To bring to his bed the blest among women,
Bracelet-laden, and lordly with rings.
And swiftly his servants set to the will of
The mailed ones' master, and made in a flash
To the guest-room of Judith, of judgement deep.
And they found her, and fetched the fairest of ladies
To his tall-arched tent, the targeted warriors,
Where the lord Holofernes, the loathed of the Saviour,
Slept through the night; and encircling the couch
Was a curtain all netted of comeliest gold
For the captain of war and contriver of harms
To watch on the warriors that went to his chamber,
And be noted by none that came near him of mortals
Whom he called not in quest of their counsel himself,
The prince in his pride, from the proven in battle.
And they carried unto his couch the woman whose cunning was
sure,
And the mind of the men was o'ercast as they went to their
master with word
That the heavenly maid had been brought to the bower; and he,
their lord,
The leader of cities, the famous, was stirred to laughter of heart,
And was fain to defile the bright one and tarnish her fairness.
God,
Wielder of war-men, and Guardian of might, and Awarder of
fame,
Kept the King from his deed, and let not the crime betide.
Then his heart was hot with his lust, and he went, the hellish
of soul,
Mid the press of his princes, along to his bed, where the pride of
his life
Was to finish before the morn; not soft was the fortune here

Of the monarch of many, the puissant of soul, but meet for his works

On earth done under the sky, and his mind was empty of wit
As he stumbled to sleep his fill, the chieftain sodden with wine.
Then strode the soldiers straight from the chamber,
Drenched in their drink; they had drawn the detested one,
False to his faith and fell to his people, the
Last time on earth to his lair, in haste.

And the handmaid of God in her heart took counsel
Swiftly to slay, as he slumbered, the terrible
Lecher unclean, for her Lord; and His maiden
With coiling tresses, caught from its scabbard
A sword that was scoured unto sharpness of temper;
And next she besought by His Name the Redeemer of
Men upon earth by His might in the firmament:
'Chief of Thy creatures and Child of Omnipotence,
Spirit of Comfort and Star of the Trinity,
Give me Thy grace in my greatness of trouble,
For my heart is afire within, and my soul is heavy, and sore
Sunken in sorrow; be mine of Thy grace, O Sovereign above,
Conquest, and keenness of faith that my sword shall cut him in
twain,

Murder's minister yonder! And mighty One, Master of all,
Glory-allotter to men, and great in Thy majesty, now
Favour and save me, of mercy, in this my fullness of need;
Wreak for the wrath and the flame of my soul a repayment.'

And soon

He in the highest who sits made sharp her heart in its strength,
As He may for us men who entreat Him aright and with meet-
ness of faith;

And the heart of the holy maid was enlarged, and her hope made
new.

And hard she haled by the hair the idolater
Deadly and hateful, and dragged him disdainfully
Forth to her featly, to fall at her mercy.

And the sword of the maiden with sinuous tresses
Flickered and fell on the furious-hearted
Bane of his foes, bit into his neck-bone.

And drunken he lay there, drowned in a stupor,
And life in him lingered, though large was his wound.

And she smote with the strength of her soul once more
At the heathenish hound, and the head rolled over
Forth on the floor; and the filthy carrion
Lay on the bed without life; but the spirit had
Fared away far in the fathomless underworld
To be hampered in hell-pains and humbled eternally,
Wreathen with serpents in regions of torment,
Fettered and fast in the flame of perdition.
He has done with our life; nor dare he have hope
In the heart of the dark habitation of dragons
Thence to depart, but he there must abide
In that dwelling of dimness, undawned on of joy,
Ever and ever for infinite ages.

translated by OLIVER ELTON: *An English Miscellany*.

THE BATTLE OF MALDON

C. H. E. L. I. 143-145. *The Battle of Maldon*, or *Byrhtnoth's Death*, one of the finest poems in Old English, belongs to the end of the tenth century. The author is unknown. Anlaf's raid, of which it tells the tragic story, took place in 991. The sole authority is Hearne's edition (1726), the MS. (Oth. A XII) having been destroyed in the Cottonian fire, 1731. What is given is all that remains.

He gave the word that every man should let his good steed go,
Should drive him far away and march afoot to meet the foe,
And hand to hand should strive the strife, and valiant heart
should know.

The son of Offa knew the earl would brook no coward blood;
He loosed his hawk and let him fly, the dear hawk, toward the
wood.

Out stept the young man to the fight, and well it might be seen
No weakling would he prove him there, as he gript his weapons
keen.

And fain was Eadric by his Lord to stand in fight that day;
By his prince's side, and forth he bore his spear unto the fray;
Stout heart he had while he could hold the shield and good
broadsword;

He made his vaunting true, in van of battle by his lord.

Then Byrhtnoth gan array his men; he rode and gave the rede,
He shewed the fighters how to stand and keep the place at need,
Fast with their hands to hold the shields, nor be afraid indeed.

Then, when that host of his was set in order fair and due,
He 'lighted where it pleased him best, where his own true-men
he knew.

The vikings' herald stood on shore, and threateningly and loud
He gave the earl upon the bank the seafolk's message proud.
'The swift seamèn have sent me here, and bid me say to thee
Full quickly must thou send them rings, in safety wouldest thou be;
And better 'tis for you buy off this onset of the spear
With tribute, than that we should deal so sore a combat here:
We need not spill each other's lives if ye make fast aright
A peace with us; if thou agree, thou, here the most of might,
Thy folk to ransom, and to give the seamen what shall be
Right in their eyes, and take our peace, make peace with told
monèy,

We'll haste to ship, we'll keep that peace, and go upon the sea.'

Then Byrhtnoth spake, he raised his shield, he shook the slender
spear,

Angry and steadfast spake in words, and made him thus answèr:
'Dost hear, thou dweller on the sea, what this my people saith?
Their tribute is the spear, the sword, the arrow tipt with death;
War-harness that for you in fight full little profiteth.

'Now, herald of the sea-folk, take this message back, and say
Thou bearest them an ill tiding, an evil word to-day;
Say that amid his host an earl undaunted here doth stand
For his own soil, his prince's earth, the people, and the land.
In battle must the heathen fall; too shameful in my thought,
Ye went with tribute forth from us unto your ships unfought,
Now ye are hither come so far into our land unsought.
And think ye not so lightly ye shall treasure win this day,
For sword and blade shall us atone ere we will tribute pay.'

Then did he bid them bear the shield; he bad the men a-rank
March on, till all were standing there, upon the river bank.

Now host might not with host contend, the tide was at its height;
After the ebb came flowing flood, the lake-streams linked their
might:

Too long it seemed to wait until the spears might clash in fight.

Then Pantē's stream they did beset with all their strong array,
The forefront of the East Saxons, and the sea-folk's host that day.
No one could hurt another there, save by the arrow's flight.
The flood went out, the seamen stood all eager for the fight.
Then did the Shelter of Heroes give the word the bridge to hold
To Wulfstan, him to war inured, by race a warrior bold,
(He was the son of Ceola), and his ready spear out-leapt
To smite who, boldest of the foe, first on the bridge had stept.
With him the undaunted mighty twain, Aelfhere and Maccus
were,

These from the ford not fain to flee, but steadfast-handed there,
Defended them against the foe, while weapons they might bear.

Then when the foe began to see, and know full certainly
The keepers of the bridge to them right better ones would be,
Dissemble did these loathly men, begged the approach indeed,
That they might overpass the ford, their troops across might
lead—

Too much the earl in his disdain to that ill folk gave heed.

Then gan the son of Byrhthelm call across the cold water
(The warriors hearkened while he spake), ‘Now is your way
made clear;

Come straightway on to us. Advance, men, to the fight’ (he said),
‘God only knoweth which of us shall keep the battle-stead.’

The wolves of slaughter strode along, nor for the water cared,
The host of vikings westward there across the Pantē fared;
O'er the clear water bare their shields, their bucklers to the land,
Where, ready for the foe's coming, with his men did Byrhtnoth
stand.

He bad with shields the war-hedge make, to keep them 'gainst
the foe;

The glory of battle, the fight was nigh, now must the doomed
lie low.

Then rose a cry as round and round the ravens wheeled in air,
The erne, all greedy for his prey; a mighty din was there.

Then from their hands the file-sharp lance, the keen-ground
spear, they sent,

The shield received the dart's onset, the bows full busy went.
Oh, bitter was the battle rush, the rush of war that day;

Then fell the men; on either hand the gallant young men lay.

Then Wulfmaer took the wound of death, the battle-bed he won;
Full sorely pierced and hewn with swords was Byrhtnoth's
sister's son.

The vikings had their due; I have heard that Eadward mightily
With his good sword slew one of them, nor from its swing stayed he,
So that the doomèd warrior fell down straightway at his feet;
His prince gave him, his chamber-thane, thanks when the time
was meet.

Fast stood the strong-souled youths in fight, full eager in the
strife,

Who first with weapon-point should take the doomed foemen's life.
Then slaughter was upon the earth: they stood all steadfastly,
And Byrhtnoth set them in array, and every thought bade he
Of every youth be set on war, who would the victory.

Then one in battle rage went forth, aloft he reared his shield,
His covert buckler, striding there against our chief in field:
So went the earl full resolute against the churlish foe;
Each all intent on other's ill, to work him bale and woe.

The seaman sent a southern dart, it struck the chief amain,
He thrust with shield and shivered it: back sprang that spear
again.

Then raged the fighter, with his dart that viking proud pierced he,
That gave the wound; he pierced his neck with javelin skilfully,
He guided well his hand that so might death the scather see.

Then swift he thrust another one, through shattered corslet prest
The spear that bare the mortal wound, the death-stroke through
the breast.

The blither was the earl for that, out laughed the warrior grim,
Thanked God because of that day's work, which God had given
him.

Then from his hand one sent a dart, from his grasp to fly amain,
That all too quickly did it pierce Æthelred's noble thane.
Beside him stood a lad ungrown, a boy i' the field; no fear
He knew, but from his lord's body drew forth the bloody spear.
'Twas Wulfstan's son, the young Wulfmaer; that sharp spear on
its way

He sent a-travelling back again to pierce that foe in fray
Who erst had sorely hit his lord, that on the ground he lay.

Then went an armed man to the earl, his jewels would he claim,
The warrior's garments and his rings, and fretted sword of fame;
Then Byrhtnoth drew a sword from sheath, broad, brown of
edge and hard,

And smote upon his corslet so to deal him his reward:
Too soon a seaman hindered him; that good arm's strength he
marred.

He let it drop and fall to ground, his sword with hilt of gold,
He could not wield the weapon more, the keen-edged falchion
hold.

Yet spake the word that warrior hoar, the young men's hearts
he cheered,

Bade the good comrades forward go, nor ever be afeard:
No longer could he firmly stand on 's feet; to heaven looked he—
'Thanks, Lord of hosts, for these world-joys Thou here didst
give to me;

Now merciful Creator, now, I stand in deepest need
That Thou should'st grant my spirit good, that thus my soul
indeed

Fare forth to Thee, travel with peace, O King of Angels, so;
I pray Thee that the hell-spoilers nor work her hurt nor woe.'

The heathen varlets smote him down, and those that stood him by,
Ælfnoth and Wulfmaer, by the side of him in death did lie.

Then those who loved not there to be did turn them from the
fight;

The three, the sons of Odda, they were foremost in the flight.
'Twas Godric from the battle fled, forsook that noble one
Who gave him many a goodly steed full oft; he leapt upon
The horse in's trappings which his lord had owned: it was not
right;

And both his brethren ran with him, they cared not for the fight,
Godrinc and Godwig turned away from battle-rush and strife,
Fled to the shelter of the wood, to the fastness, for their life;
And with them more than had behoved if these had thought upon
The gifts and goods so free bestowed by him, their mighty one.
E'en so the words that Offa spake to them upon a day
When in the council-hall they talked about the fight and fray,
How many a one did speak the word who would not do the deed,
And many valiant in the tongue would fail in time of need.

Now fallen was the people's prince, Æthelraed's earl that day,
 And all his own hearth-comrades saw that low their leader lay.
 Then went there forth proud thanes, brave men; they hastened
 eagerly,

One of two things their hearts' desire—to avenge their lord or die.

So Ælfric's son well heartened them, a warrior young in years,
 Ælfwine spake, his words rang out in courage on their ears:
 'Remember when we drank the mead, when at the board we
 reared

The boast aloft, heroes in hall, o' the sharp fight unafraid.
 Now be it proven who is brave; mine own good blood I'll shew;
 Among the Mercian folk I come of lofty strain, I know;
 The wise chief, Ealhhelm, strong and rich, my father's sire was he;
 Thanes in that land shall twit me not that I go home to see
 My own country now that my prince here lieth slain with
 sword—

Oh, ill of ills to me!—he was my kinsman and my lord.'

Then went he forth, on vengeance bent; his weapon quickly
 found

A seaman there amid the host, and smote him to the ground.
 He heartened well the men for fray, each gallant friend and
 fere—

Then Offa lifted up his voice, he shook the ashwood spear—
 'Lo Ælfwine, thou hast made strong our hearts in this our
 need;

Now that our prince lies low o' the earth, behoves us all indeed
 That each make strong his fellow's heart while spear and sword
 we wield,

For Godric, Odda's coward son, hath played us false in field:
 Full many a man, because of him, deemed, as he rode on steed,
 As on the prideful horse he rode, it was our lord indeed;
 Therefore the folk was scattered sore, the shieldburg broke in
 flight—

A curse upon his dastard deed that put our men to flight!'

Then Leofsunu, he spake, aloft he held his buckler there,
 He raised his linden-shield on high, and made him thus answer—
 'I swear to thee I will not hence with ready foot in flight,
 But will go on and will avenge my friend-lord in the fight:

Nor need the steadfast ones who dwell at Sturmere twit me then
That, now my friend has fallen in fight, I homeward fare again,
Go, lordless, from the fight; but I shall weapons take to me,
The iron sword and spear.' Then lo, he went forth eagerly,
His heart despised the thought of flight, and stubborn-souled
fought he.

Then Dunnere spake; he shook his lance; he called with mighty
breath,

The old man, upon every one to avenge his leader's death.
'He must not pause, nor for his life have any care,' he spoke,
'Who thinketh to avenge his lord upon the heathen folk.'

Forth went they, Byrhtnoth's body-men, no care for life had
they,

Then gan they stark and strong to fight, those spearmen in the
fray:

They lifted up a prayer to God that vengeance they might know
For their friend-lord, avenge him well, work death upon the foe.

It was the hostage then began to help them willingly;
Among the good Northumbrian folk of gallant kin came he:
Ecglaf, his sire, Æscferth his name, he stayed not from the fight,
The game of war, but sent abroad full many a shaft in flight.

Now would his wounding smite a man, now would he strike a
shield;

From time to time he dealt a wound, while weapons he might
wield.

Edward the Long stood yet in front; ready and keen was he;
He spake in words of gallant vaunt, that never a foot he'd flee,
Nor turn his back while's Better there upon the ground lay
low:—

He brake the wall of shields, he fought against the heathen foe,
Till worthy vengeance he had wreaked on the viking host that
day,

For his lord, his giver of gold, ere yet upon the earth he lay.

So Ætheric, noble fere, likewise, full ready forth to go,
All stoutly Sigebyrht's brother fought, and many a man also.
Oh, keenly fought those fighters there; they clave the hollow
shield;

The shield-edge brake, the corslet sang a war-song in the field.

Then in the fray did Offa smite the seaman that he died;
 And there to Offa, Gadde's son, himself, did death betide:
 Full soon he lay, forwounded sore, but well had kept his word,
 His vaunt unto his giver of gold, his promise to his lord,
 That both should safe come home and ride within the city wall
 Or die i' the midst of foemen's host, i' the place of slaughter fall.
 Thanelike he lay beside his prince. Then were the shields broken,
 Then, fierce with battle-rage and heat, they went those grim
 seamen;
 Full often times the spear did pierce the doomed man's body then.
 Then forth went Wigstan, Thurstan's son, against those men
 he fought;
 He was the slayer of three of them, ere's battle-bed he sought.
 'Twas a fell meeting there that day; in fight fast stood the men;
 Wearied with wounds the warriors sank; on earth was slaughter
 then.
 And all the while those warriors twain, Oswold and Ealdwold,
 they
 Heartened the men, begged the dear kin that these, at need, that
 day,
 Should stand, endure, and use thesword, strong-handed in the fray.
 Then Byrhtwold spake, that comrade old, he raised the shield
 on high,
 He shook the ashwood spear, he taught the men unfearingly:
 'The braver must our spirit be, our hearts the stronger far,
 The greater must our courage wax, the fewer that we are.
 Here lies our prince all pierced and hewn, the good one in the clay;
 Aye may he mourn who thinketh now to leave this battle-play.
 I am old in life, I will not hence, I think to lay me here
 The rather by my chieftain's side, a man so lief and dear.'

So did the son of Æthelgar make bold the men in heart;
 Full oft did Godric send the spear a-flying, the deadly dart,
 Among the vikings, even as first amid the folk went he,
 And hewed and felled till in the fight he lay full low to see;
 'Twas not that Godric who had turned his back upon the fight.

* * * * * *

translated by EMILY HICKEY: *Verse-Tales, Lyrics, and Translations.*

APOLLONIUS OF TYRE

C. H. E. L. I. 151. The popular story of *Apollonius of Tyre* was written in Greek (3rd cent. A.D.?), rendered into Latin, and thence translated into English by an unknown writer, probably at the end of the tenth century. The story appears in *Gesta Romanorum*, in Gower (*Confessio Amantis*, Bk viii), and in *Pericles* (generally called Shakespeare's), where Gower appears as Chorus. See Thorpe: *Apollonius of Tyre*, 1834.

(a) THE SHIPWRECK

Apollonius bade them all farewell, and went aboard his ship. Now when they had begun to row, and were somewhat advanced on their journey, suddenly the sea's calm was stirred up within the space of two hours, and a great tempest arose, so that the sea smote the stars of heaven, and the welter of the billows raged with the winds. Moreover the northeast winds arose, and the fierce southwest winds battled against them, until the ship went to pieces in this dreadful storm. All of Apollonius' companions perished utterly, and he alone came in safety to Pentapolis, in the land of Cyrene, and there climbed up on the shore. There he stood naked on the beach, and gazing at the sea cried out:

'O Neptune, ravager of the sea, despoiler of man and deceiver of the innocent! Thou art more cruel than King Antiochus. On my account hast thou maintained this cruelty, that I, by thy means, should become destitute and needy, so that the cruel king might the more easily destroy me. Whither can I now turn? what can I ask for? or who will give sustenance to an unknown man?'

(b) THE FISHERMAN

While he was thus reasoning with himself, suddenly he saw a certain fisherman coming toward him, to whom he turned and thus dolefully spake: 'Whoever thou art, old man, have pity upon me! Have pity upon me, naked and shipwrecked as I am! I was not born of lowly parentage; but that you may know to whom you show pity, I am Apollonius, Prince of Tyre.'

Then as soon as the fisherman saw that the young man lay at his feet, he raised him up with compassion, led him to his house, and set before him the food which he had to offer him. And since he desired to show him still more kindness, even to

the best of his ability, he tore his cloak in two, and gave half to Apollonius, saying, ‘Take what I have to give you and go into the city. Perchance you may find some one who will show you kindness. If you find no one, come hither again, and let my few possessions suffice for us both; and come and fish with me. Nevertheless I adjure you, if ever again by the goodness of God you come to your former dignity, forget not my poor garment.’

Then said Apollonius: ‘If I do not remember you when it is again well with me, may I once more suffer shipwreck, and not meet a second time with one like you.’

(c) THE GYMNASIUM

After these words he proceeded on the way which was shown him until he came to the city gate, and there he entered in. And while he was considering whom he should ask for sustenance, he saw a boy running along the street, clothed in a tunic only. He was anointed with oil and girt with a linen cloth, and carried in his hands games such as youth are wont to play in the gymnasium. And he cried with a loud voice, saying: ‘Hearken, O citizens; hearken, O foreigners; freeman and slave, noble and burgess! The gymnasium is open!’

When Apollonius heard this, he took off the half-garment that he was wearing, and went into the pool. And when he saw them all at their exercise, he looked about for his peer, but he could find none in the company. Then suddenly came Arcestrates, king of all that people, with a great throng of his retainers, and entered the gymnasium. And the king began to play ball with his companions. Then Apollonius, as God ordained, joined in the king’s game; he ran and caught the ball, and, hitting it with great swiftness, sent it back to the king who was playing. He threw it back again. Apollonius struck it instantly, not allowing it to drop. The king then perceived the agility of the youth, and knew that none was his equal in the game. And he said to his companions: ‘Get ye hence; this youth, methinks, is my equal.’

When Apollonius heard the king praise him, he straightway ran and drew near the king, and with skilled hand threw the ball with such speed that it seemed to the king as if he were transformed from an old man to a boy. And after this he ministered most acceptably to the king on his throne, and when

Apollonius went out of the gymnasium he led the king by the hand, and so departed the way he had come.

Then after Apollonius had gone, the king said to his retainers: 'I swear by our common salvation that I never had a better bath than I did to-day, because of the service of that young man whom I know not.' And he turned to one of his men and said: 'Go and find out who the young man is who was so agreeable to me to-day.'

So the man went after Apollonius. But when he saw that he was clothed in a squalid cloak, he returned to the king and said: 'The young man for whom you inquired is a shipwrecked man.' Then said the king: 'How do you know that?' The man answered and said: 'Even if he should deny it himself, his clothes would betray him.' Then said the king: 'Go quickly and say to him, "The king invites you to his feast."'

translated by SAMUEL B. HEMINGWAY: *Select Translations from Old English Prose* (Cook and Tinker).

THE NORMAN CONQUEST

ANGLO-NORMAN LITERATURE

C. H. E. L. I. 149–155. The invasion of English literature by Norman-French influence cannot be dated from ‘the autumn day that saw Harold’s levies defeated by Norman archers on the slopes of Senlac.’ It had begun in the time of Edward the Confessor, who was the grandson of a Norman duke and had spent his years of exile in Normandy. Nevertheless, the year 1066 is a crucial point, simply because, from that date, the language of the ruling class was no longer English. ‘The development of the old vernacular literature was arrested for nearly a hundred and fifty years after Hastings’; in fact, the literature of England for that period is mainly in Latin. ‘Very little of the vernacular literature of France, at the time of the Conquest, was transplanted to English soil’; but the language came, and with it came a change in the orientation of our literature. The English poets began to turn their eyes from the North and East and to look South. When the Normans landed, Taillefer the *jongleur* came first, as Wace tells us, and sang as he came.

Taillefer ki moult bien cantout
Sur un roussin qui tot alout
Devant li dus alout cantant
De Kalermaine e de Rolant,
E d’Oliver et des vassals
Ki moururent à Roncevals.

The invasion of England by Taillefer and his song of Roland is as important as the invasion of England by William and his Norman knighthood. It was the coming, not, indeed, of romance, for that we had before; but it was the coming of Romance. In the end it was the English language that conquered; but in conquering it suffered a sea-change. The asperities of the Northern Ocean and the Baltic were softened by the waters of the Mediterranean. The story of Roland, sung by Taillefer, is now immortally known to us in the *Chanson de Roland*, an epic of some 4000 lines, which reached its present form in the eleventh century. The best and oldest manuscript, now at Oxford, dates from the twelfth century. Roland, the heroic paladin of Charlemagne, betrayed by Ganelon in the pass of Roncesvalles, defeated, and wounded to death, sinks down with his great horn Olifant and his unbroken sword Durandel beneath him:

Ço sent Rodlanz que la mort l’entreprend,
Devers la teste sour lo cuer li descent;
Dessoz un pin en est alez corant,
Sour l’erbe vert s’ est colchiez adenz;

Dessoz lui met s'espéde e l'olifant,
 Tornat sa teste vers la pailéne gent,
 Por ço l'at fait qued il vuelt veirement
 Que Charles diet et trestote sa gent
 Li gentilz coms qu'il est morz conquerant.
 Claimet sa colpe et menut et sovent,
 Por ses pechiez Dieu porofrit lo guant.

Ço sent Rodlanz de son tens n'i at plus;
 Devers Espaigne gist en un pui agut;
 A l'une main si at son piz batut:
 'Dieus! meie colpe, par la toe vertut
 De mes pechiez, des granz et des menuz,
 Que jo ai faiz des l'ore que nez fui
 Tresque a cest jorn que ci sui conseüz'
 Son destre guant en at vers Dieu tendut;
 Angele del ciel en descendant a lui.

Li coms Rolanz se jut dessoz un pin,
 Envers Espaigne en at tornét son vis,
 De plusors choses a remembrer li prist:
 De tantes terres come li ber conquist,
 De dolce France, des omes de son ling,
 De Charlemagne, son seignor, quil nodrit,
 Ne puet muder ne plort e ne sospirt.
 Mais sei medesme ne vuelt mêtre en oblit:
 Claimet sa colpe, si priet Dieu merci....

It was this that invaded England in 1066—this shape and way of literature. The spirit of Roland and his peers in the pass of Roncesvalles is the spirit of Byrhtnoth and his friends on the river bank at Maldon; but the note of its expression is different; and this new touch of Romance became, with other new impulses in the general arts of life, a shaping force in the making of England.

Other songs like Taillefer's were sung here in the early Norman days; but they were never written down and they have perished. The little that remains of the first Anglo-Norman literature has much historical interest, but cannot be regarded with literary enthusiasm. Cambridge and Oxford both possess manuscripts of the Psalms belonging to the early part of the twelfth century. Here is the first psalm from the Oxford version.

Beneurez li huem chi ne alat el conseil des feluns, e en la veie
 des peccheurs ne stout, e en la chaere de pestilence ne sist.

Mais en la lei de nostre Seignur la voluntet de lui, e en la
 sue lei purpenserat par jurn e par nuit.

E iert ensement cume le fust qued est plantet dejuste les decurs
 des ewes, chi dunrat sun frut en sun tens.

Et sa fuille ne decurrat, e toutes les coses que il unques ferat
 serunt fait prospres.

Nient eissi li felun, nient eissi; mais ensement cume la puldre
 que li venz getet de la face de terre.

Empurice ne resurdent li felun en juise, ne li pecheur el conse
des dreituriers.

Kar nostre Sire cunuist la veie des justes, e le eire des felur
perirat.

MICHEL: *Libri Psalmorum*, 1860

The first name we encounter in poetry is that of Philippe de Thaon, cleric of London, whose *Comput* (c. 1119) is a poem in rhyming lines of six syllables explanatory of the calendar. A little later is his *Bestiary*, in a similar metre, first exemplar here of a long line of similar moral composition. This is the manner of it:

Monosceros est beste, un corn ad en la teste,
Pur çeo ad si à nun, de buc ad façun,
Par pucele est prise, or oez en quel guise.
Quant hom le volt cacer e prendre j enginner,
Si vent hom al forest ù sis repairs est;
Là met une pucele hors de sein sa mamele,
E par odurement monosceros la sent;
Dunc vent à la pucele, e si baiset sa mamele,
En sun devant se dort, issi vent à sa mort;
Li hom survent atant, ki l'ocit en dormant,
U trestut vif le prent, si fait puis sun talent.
Grant chose signefie, ne larei ne l' vus die.
Monosceros Griu est, en Franceis *un corn* est:
Beste de tel baillie Jhesu Crist signefie;
Un deu est e serat e fud e parmaindrat;
En la virgine se mist, e pur hom charn i prist,
E pur virginited pur mustrer casteed;
A virgine se parut e virgine le conceut,
Virgine est e serat a tuz jurz parmaindrat.
Or oez brefment le signefiemant.
Ceste beste en verté nus signefie Dé;
La virgine signefie sacez Sancte Marie;
Par sa mamele entent sancte eglise ensement;
E puis par le baiser çeo deit signefier,
Que hom quant il se dort en semblance est de mort:
Dés cum hom dormi, ki en la cruij mort sufri,
E sa destructiun nostre redemptiun,
E sun traveillement nostre reposement,
Si deceut Dés diable par semblant cuvenable;
Anme e cors sunt un, issi fud Dés j hom,
E çeo signefie beste de tel baillie.

To the first quarter of the twelfth century belongs also Benoit's *Vie de St Brendan* (MS Cott. Ves. B x), of which the dedication may be quoted:

Donna Aaliz la reine,
 Par qui valdrat lei divine,
 Par qui creistrat lei de terre,
 E remandrat tante guerre
 Por les armes Henri lu rei,
 E par le cunseil qui ert en tei,
 Salvet tei mil e mil feiz
 Li apostoiles danz Benediz.
 Que comandas, ço ad enpris,...
 Secund sun sens entremis,
 En letre mis e en romanz,
 E si cum fud li teons cumanz,
 De saint Brendan le bon abeth;
 Mais tu l' defent, ne seit gabeth.
 Quant dit que set e fait que peot,
 Itel servant blasmer n'esteot;
 Mais si qui peot e ne voile,
 Dreiz est que cil mult se doile....

In other languages, however, something better was done. A poem of the Anglo-French Hilarius (early 12th century) is a charming example of rhymed Latin:

...Ave, splendor puellarum,
 generosa domina,
 Gemma micans, sidus clarum,
 speciosa femina,
 Quæ præcellis, et non parum,
 mulierum agmina,
 Bonum ingens, bonum rarum,
 mea lege carmina.
 Crede mihi, cum natura
 te primo composuit,
 Ad probandum sua jura
 te mundo proposuit.
 Dotes multas, bona plura
 tibi quidem tribuit;
 Et quid posset sua cura
 prudenter exhibuit.
 Te produxit generosam
 parentum nobilitas,

Te produxit speciosam
benigna nativitas;
Te severam, te jocosam
doctrinæ frugalitas;
Nomen tuum signat rosam,
et ecce virginitas....

HILARIUS: *Versus et Ludi* (1838).

THE OLD ENGLISH CHRONICLE

YEAR 1087

G. H. E. L. I. 108-113. The *Chronicle* still continued in its native English. During the troubled times that followed the death of Alfred, the *Chronicle*, almost alone, ‘marks for more than half-a-century the continuance of literary activity....Owing to the number of hands employed in its composition, the literary merit is very unequal.’ Its principal recensions, six in number, differ in details and in length, but not in the main story. The end of the present extract (p. 121, ll. 4-21) falls into roughly rimed verse.

Æfter ure Drihtnes Hælendes Cristes gebyrtide • an þusend
wintra • Ȑ sefan Ȑ hundeahatig wintra • on þam án Ȑ twentigan
geare þæs þe Willem weolde Ȑ stihte Engleland • swa him
God uðe • gewearð swiðe heflic and swiðe woldberendlic gear
on þissem lande. Swylc coðe com on mannum • þ fullneah
æfre þe oðer man wearð on þam wyrrestan yfele • þet is on
þam drife • Ȑ þet swa stranglice þ mænige menn swulton on
þam yfele. Syððan com þurh þa mycclan ungewiderunge • þe
comon swa we beforan tealdon • swiðe mycel hungor ofer eall
Engleland • þ manig hundred manna earmlice deaðe swulton
þurh þone hungor. Eala hu earmlice Ȑ hu reowlic tid wæs
þa. Ða þa wreccæ men lægen fordrifene full neah to deaðe
Ȑ siððan com se scearpa hungor Ȑ adyde hi mid ealle. Hwam
ne mæg earmian swylcere tide? oððe hwa is swa heard heort
þ ne mæg wepan swylces ungelimpes? Ac swylce þing ge-
wurðað for folces synna þ hi nellað lufian God Ȑ rihtwisnesse
swa swa hit wæs þa on þam dagum • þ litel rihtwisnesse wæ-
on þisum lande mid ænige menn • buton mid munecan ane
þær þær hi wæll ferdon. Se cyng Ȑ þa heafod men lufedon
swiðe Ȑ ofer swiðe gitsunge on golde Ȑ on seolfre • Ȑ ne rohta-
hu synlice hit wäre begytan • buton hit come to heom. Se cyn-
sealde his land swa deore to male swa heo deorost mihte • þonn

com sum oðer ȝ bead mare þonne ȝe oðer ær sealde. ȝ se cyng hit lett þam menn ȝe him mare bead. þonne com se þridde. ȝ bead geat mare. ȝ se cyng hit let þam men to handa ȝe him eallra meast bead. ȝ ne rohte na hu swiðe synlice þa gerefan hit begeatan of earmē mānnon. ne hu manige unlaga hi dydon. Ac swa man swyðor spæc embe rihte lage. swa mann dyde mare unlaga. Hi arerdon unrihte tollas. ȝ manige oðre unriht hi dydan. ȝe sindon earfeþe to areccenne. Eac on þam ilcan geare ætforan hærfeste forbarn þ halige mynster Sce Paule. ȝe b.stole on Lundene. ȝ mænige oðre mynstres. ȝ þ mæste dæl ȝ þ rotteste eall þære burh. Swylce eac. on þam ilcan timan. forbarn fullneah ælc heafod port on eallon Englelande. Eala reowlīc ȝ wependlic tid wæs þæs geares. ȝe swa manig ungelimp wæs forðbringende. Eac on þam ilcan geare. toforan Assumptio Sce Marie. for Willelm cyng of Normandige into France mid fyrde. ȝ hergode uppā his agenne hlaford Philippe þam cyng. ȝ sloh of his mānnon mycelne dæl. ȝ forbearnde þa burh Maþante. ȝ ealle þa halige mynstres ȝe wæron innon þære burh. ȝ twegen halige menn. ȝe hyrsumedon Gode on ancer settle wuniende. þær wæron forbearnde. Dissum þus gedone. se cyng Willelm cearde ongēan to Normandige. Reowlīc þing he dyde. ȝ reowlīcor him gelamp. Hu reowlīcor? him geyfelade. ȝ þ him stranglice églade. Hwæt mæg ic teollan? Se scearpa deað. ȝe ne forlet ne rice menn ne heane. seo hine genam. He swealt on Normandige. on þone nextan dæg æfter Natiuitas Sce Marie. ȝ man bebyrgede hine on Caþum. æt Sce Stephanes mynstre. ærer he hit aræde. ȝ siððan mænifealdlice gegodade. Eala hu leas ȝ hu unwrest is þysses middaneardes wela. Se ȝe wæs ærur rice cyng ȝ maniges landes hlaford. he næfde þa ealles landes buton sefon fot mæl. ȝ se ȝe wæs hwilon gescrid mid golde ȝ mid gimmum. he læg þa oferwrogen mid moldan. He læfde æfter him þeo sunan. Rodbeard hét se yldesta. se wæs eorl on Normandige æfter him. Se oðer hét Willelm. ȝe bær æfter him on Engleland þone kinehelm. Se þridda het Heanric. þam se fæder becwæð gersuman unateallendlice. Gif hwa gewitnigeð to gewitane hu gedon mann he wæs. oððe hwilcne wurðscipe he hæfde. oððe hu fela lande he wäre hlaford. þonne wille we be him awritan swa swa we hine ageaton. ȝe him on locodan. ȝ oðre hwile on his hirede wunedon. Se cyng Willelm

þe we embe specað wæs swiðe wis man . Ȑ swiðe rīce . Ȑ wurðfulre Ȑ strengere þonne ænig his foregenga wäre. He wæs milde þam godum mannum þe God lufedon . Ȑ ofer eall gemett stearc þam mannum þe wiðcwædon his willan. On þam ilcan steode þe God him geuðe þe he moste Engleland gegān . he arerde mære mynster . Ȑ munecas þær gesætte . þe hit wæll gegodade. On his dagan wæs þe mære mynster on Cantwarbyrig getymbrad . Ȑ eac swiðe manig oðer ofer eall Englaland. Eac þis land wæs swiðe afyllde mid munecan . Ȑ þa leofodan heora lif æfter Sēs Benedictus regule . Ȑ se Xpēndom wæs swilc on his dæge . Ȑ ælc man hwæt his hade to belumpe folgade se þe wolde. Eac he wæs swyðe wurðful . þriwa he bær his cynehelm ælce geare . swa oft swa he wæs on Englelande. On Eastron he hine bær on Winceastrē . on Pentecosten on Westmynstre . on Midewintre on Gleawecastre . Ȑ þænne wæron mid him ealle þa rice men ofer eall Englaland . arcebiscopas . Ȑ leodbiscopas . abbodas . Ȑ eorlas . þegnas . Ȑ cnihtas. Swilce he wæs eac swyðe stearc man Ȑ ræðe . swa þe man ne dorste nan þing ongean his willan dōn. He hæfde eorlas on his bendum . þe dydan ongean his willan. Biscopas he sætte of heora biscoprice . Ȑ abbodas of heora abbb.rice . Ȑ þægnas on cweatern . Ȑ æt nextan he ne sparode his agene broðor Odo hēt. He wæs swiðe rīce Ȑ. on Normandige . on Baius wæs his Ȑ. stol . Ȑ wæs manna fyrmost to eacan þam cyng . Ȑ he hæfde eorldom on Englelande . Ȑ þonne se cyng [wæs] on Normandige . þonne wæs he mægeste on þisum lande . Ȑ hine he sætte on cweatern. Betwyx oðrum þingum nis na to forgytane þe gode frið he he macode on þisan lande . swa þe án man þe himsylf aht wäre mihte faran ofer his rice mid his bosum full goldes ungederad. Ȑ nan man ne dorste slean oðerne man . næfde he næfre swa mycel yfel gedón wið þone oðerne. Ȑ gif hwilc carlman hæmde wið wimman hire unðances . sona he forleas þa limu þe he mid pleagode. He rixade ofer Englæland . Ȑ hit mid his geapsceipe swa þurhmeade . Ȑ næs án hid landes innan Englælande þe he nyste hwa heo hæfde . oððe hwæs heo wurð wæs . Ȑ syððan on his gewrit gesætt. Brytland him wæs on gewealde . Ȑ he þærinne casteles gewrohte . Ȑ þet manncynn mid ealle gewealde. Swilce eac Scotland he him underþædde . for his mycle strengþe. Normandige þe land wæs his gecynde . Ȑ ofer þone

eorldom þe Mans is gehaten he rixade . ⁊ gif he moste þa gyt
twa gear libban . he hafde Yrlande mid his werscipe gewunnon .
⁊ wiðutan ælcon wæpnon. Witodlice on his timan hæfdon
men mycel geswinc ⁊ swiðe manige teonan. Castelas he lét
wyrcean . ⁊ earme men swiðe swencean. Se cyng wæs swa
swiðe stearc . ⁊ benam of his underþeoddan manig marc
goldes . ⁊ mā hundred punda seolfres . þet he nam be wihte
⁊ mid mycelan ûnrihte of his landleode for littelre neode. He
wæs on gitsunge befeallan . ⁊ grædinæsse he lufode mid ealle.
He sætte mycel deor frið . ⁊ he lægde laga þærwið . þ swa
hwa swa slogue heort oððe hinde . þ hine man sceolde blendian.
He forbead þa heortas . swylce eac þa baras . swa swiðe he
lufode þa headeór . swilce he wære heora fæder. Eac he sætte
be þam haran þ hi mosten freo faran. His rice men hit
mændon . ⁊ þa earme men hit beceoridan. Ac he wæs swa
stið . þ he ne rohte heora eallra nið . ac hi moston mid ealle
þes cynges wille folgian . gif hi woldon libban . oððe land
habban . oððe eahta . oððe wel his sehta. Wala wā þ ænig
man sceolde modigan swa . hine sylf üpp ahebban . ⁊ ofer ealle
men tellan. Se ælmihtiga God cyþæ his saule mildheortnisse .
⁊ do him his synna forgifenesse. Das þing we habbað be him
gewritene . ægðer ge gode ge yfele . þ þa godan men niman
æfter heora godnesse . ⁊ forfleon mid ealle yfelnesse . ⁊ gan on
þone wégi þe us lett to heofonan rice.

After the birth-tide of our Lord Jesus Christ one thousand and seven and eighty winters, in the one and twentieth year after William ruled and held despotic sway over England, as God had granted him, there was a very heavy and very pestilent year in this land. Such a malady came on men that almost every other man was in the worst evil, that is with fever, and that so strongly that many men died of the evil. Afterwards there came, through the great tempests which came as we have before told, a very great famine over all England, so that many hundred men perished by death through that famine. Alas! how miserable and how rueful a time was then! when the wretched men lay driven almost to death, and afterwards came the sharp famine and quite destroyed them. Who cannot feel pity for such a time? or who is so hard-hearted that cannot bewail such misfortune? But such things befall for a folk's sins, because they will not love

God and righteousness: so as it was in those days, that little righteousness was in this land with any man, save with the monks alone, wherever they fared well. The king and the head men loved much, and over much, covetousness in gold and in silver, and recked not how sinfully it might be got, provided it came to them. The king gave his land as dearly for rent as he possibly could; then came some other and bade more than the other had before given, and the king let it to the man who had bidden him more; then came a third and bade yet more, and the king gave it up to the man who had bidden most of all. And he recked not how very sinfully the reeves got it from poor men, nor how many illegalities they did; but the more that was said about right law, the more illegalities were done. They levied unjust tolls, and many other unjust things they did, which are difficult to reckon. Also, in the same year, before autumn, the holy monastery of St Paul, the episcopal see of London, was burnt, and many other monasteries, and the greatest and fairest part of the whole city. So also, at the same time, almost every chief town in all England was burnt. Alas! a rueful and deplorable time was it in that year, which brought forth so many misfortunes! Also in the same year, before the Assumption of St Mary (Aug. 15th), king William went from Normandy into France with a force, and made war upon his own lord, Philip the king, and slew a great part of his men, and burned the town of Mantes, and all the holy monasteries that were within the town; and two holy men, who obeyed God and dwelt in a hermitage, were there burnt. This being thus done, king William turned again to Normandy. A rueful thing he did, and a more rueful befel him. How more rueful? He fell sick, and was severely afflicted. What can I tell? Sharp death, that leaves neither powerful men nor humble, took him. He died in Normandy, on the next day after the Nativity of St Mary (Sept. 9th), and he was buried at Caen, in the monastery of St Stephen, which he had formerly erected, and afterwards manifoldly endowed. Alas! how false and how unstable is this world's wealth! He who was before a powerful king, and lord of many a land, had then of all his land only a portion of seven feet; and he who was whilom decked with gold and with gems, lay then covered over with mould! He left after him three sons; Robert was the eldest named, who was count of Normandy after him; the second

was called William, who bare after him the royal crown in England; the third was called Henry, to whom his father bequeathed treasures innumerable. If any one desires to know what kind of man he was, or what worship he had, or of how many lands he was lord, then we will write of him so as we understood him who have looked on him, and, at another time, sojourned in his court. The king William, about whom we speak, was a very wise man, and very powerful, more dignified and strong than any of his predecessors were. He was mild to the good men who loved God; and over all measure severe to the men who gainsayed his will. On that same stead, on which God granted him that he might subdue England, he reared a noble monastery, and there placed monks, and well endowed it. In his days was the noble monastery at Canterbury built, and also very many others over all England. This land was also plentifully supplied with monks, and they lived their lives after the rule of St Benedict. And in his day Christianity was such that every man who would followed what belonged to his condition. He was also very dignified; thrice every year he bare his crown, as oft as he was in England. At Easter he bare it in Winchester; at Pentecost in Westminster; at Midwinter in Gloucester. And then were with him all the great men over all England, archbishops and suffragan bishops, abbots and earls, thanes and knights. So also was he a very rigid and cruel man, so that no one durst do anything against his will. He had earls in his bonds, who had acted against his will; bishops he cast from their bishoprics, and abbots from their abbacies, and thanes into prison; and at last he spared not his own brother named Odo: he was a very rich bishop in Normandy, at Bayeux was his episcopal see; and he was the foremost man besides the king; and he had an earldom in England, and when the king was in Normandy, then was he the most powerful in this land: and him he set in prison. Among other things is not to be forgotten the good peace that he made in this land; so that a man who had any confidence in himself might go over his realm, with his bosom full of gold, unhurt. Nor durst any man slay another man had he done ever so great evil to the other. And if any common man lay with a woman against her will, he forthwith lost the members that he had sinned with. He reigned over England, and by his sagacity so thoroughly surveyed it, that

there was not a hide of land within England that he knew not who had it, or what it was worth, and afterwards set it in his writ. Brytland (Wales) was in his power, and he therein wrought castles, and completely ruled over that race of men. In like manner he also subjected Scotland to him by his great strength. The land of Normandy was naturally his, and over the county which is called Le Maine he reigned; and if he might yet have lived two years he would, by his valour, have won Ireland, and without any weapons. Certainly in his time men had great hardship and very many injuries. Castles he caused to be made, and poor men to be greatly oppressed. The king was so very rigid, and took from his subjects many a mark of gold, and more hundred pounds of silver, which he took, by right and with great unright, from his people, for little need. He had fallen into covetousness, and altogether loved greediness. He planted a great preserve for deer, and he laid down laws therewith, that whosoever should slay hart or hind should be blinded. He forbade the harts and also the boars to be killed. As greatly did he love the tall deer as if he were their father. He also ordained concerning the hares, that they should go free. His great men bewailed it, and the poor men murmured thereat; but he was so obdurate, that he recked not of the hatred of them all; but they must wholly follow the king's will, if they would live, or have land, or property, or even his peace. Alas! that any man should be so proud, so raise himself up, and account himself above all men! May the Almighty God show mercy to his soul, and grant him forgiveness of his sins! These things we have written concerning him, both good and evil, that good men may imitate their goodness, and wholly flee from the evil, and go in the way that leads us to the kingdom of heaven.

translated by BENJAMIN THORPE: *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Rolls Series).

The surviving manuscripts of the *Chronicle* are these:

- (A) Winchester (Corpus Christi Coll. Camb. CLXXXIII) to 1070.
- (B) Shorter Abingdon (Cott. Tib. A vi) to 977.
- (C) Longer Abingdon (Cott. Tib. B i) to 1066.
- (D) Worcester (Cott. Tib. B iv) to 1079.
- (E) Peterborough (Bodl. Laud 636) to 1154.
- (F) Kentish (Cott. Dom. A viii. 2) to 1058.

For the relation of the recensions to each other see *C. H. E. L.* i. 113.

LATIN CHRONICLERS FROM THE ELEVENTH TO THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

EADMER: ANSELM

C.H.E.L. I. 156–162. ‘Of all the literary monuments of the remarkable revival of learning which followed the coming of the Normans...the greatest, alike in bulk and in permanent interest and value, is the voluminous mass of Latin chronicles compiled during the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries....Some of the chronicles are real literature, and show that their writers were well aware that history has its muse....No other country produced, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, anything to be compared with the English chronicles in variety of interest, wealth of information and amplitude of range.’ The first Latin chronicler of any importance in the period is Florence of Worcester who brought his uninspired *Chronicon ex Chronicis* down to 1117. A continuation by John, another monk of Worcester, comes down to 1141. Simeon of Durham, first of the northern school in the twelfth century, carries his story to 1129. But Simeon and Florence are conscientious annalists rather than historians in any high sense. ‘Literature of a somewhat richer colour, and history of a higher order, are found in the writings of two of their contemporaries, one, like them, a pure Englishman, the other a Norman born on English soil—Eadmer and Ordericus Vitalis. Eadmer, the follower and intimate friend of Anselm, wrote in six books a history of his own times down to 1122—*Historia Novorum in Anglia*—which is full of fresh and vivid detail....Written with what William of Malmesbury calls “a chastened elegance of style,” Eadmer’s *History* is distinguished most of all by its design and sense of proportion.’

Meanwhile, one of the principal lords happened one day to remark to the king that he knew no man of such sanctity as the Abbot of Bec, for he loved nothing but God, and in all his doings cared for nothing transitory. ‘For nothing,’ replied the king, derisively, ‘what, not even for the Archbishopric of Canterbury?’ The other replied, ‘For that least of all, in my opinion, and in that of many others.’ The king swore that Anselm would run to embrace him, if he had any confidence he could by any means attain to it. And he added, ‘By the Holy Face of Lucca’

(for so he was wont to swear), ‘neither he nor any one else but myself shall be archbishop this time.’ On saying this immediately a serious illness overtook him, and laid him on his bed till after some days he seemed on the point of death. All the nobles and councillors assembled, expecting his decease. He was advised to think of the weal of his soul, open the prisons, release the captives, forgive debts, and restore liberty to the churches by allowing them pastors, especially Canterbury, as the oppression to which it had been subjected was known throughout Christendom. At that time Anselm, ignorant of all this, was staying not far from Gloucester, where the king was ill. He was sent for to come to the king in all haste and to fortify him in the hour of death by his presence. Hearing the news, he makes speed and comes....

Meanwhile the king is advised by some good men to release the common mother of the whole kingdom [the Church of Canterbury] from her state of widowhood. He consents willingly, and confesses he had this in his mind. It is asked, therefore, who could be most worthy of this honour. But all awaiting the king’s reply he himself announced—and universal applause followed the declaration—that the Abbot Anselm was most worthy. Anselm at this was terror-struck and grew pale; and when he was taken to the king that he might receive the archiepiscopal investiture from his hand, he resisted with all his power and declared that for many causes it could not be done....

Anselm remained obstinate, and was taken to the king, who being told of his persistent refusal was distressed to tears, and said, ‘O Anselm, what is it that you do? Why do you deliver me to eternal torments? Remember, I pray you, the faithful friendship my father and mother always bore to you and you to them; by it I conjure you not to allow their son to perish both in soul and body. For I am sure that I shall so perish if I die keeping the archbishopric in my hands. Help, therefore, good father, and accept the archbishopric, for the retention of which I shall be too much confounded and fear lest I shall be further confounded to eternity.’ The bystanders were pricked at these words, and as Anselm still refused to undertake such a charge they broke in, and said to him with some indignation—‘What madness has taken possession of you? You annoy the king—you positively kill him. If you do not fear to exasperate him by your obstinacy when he is dying, be assured that all the troubles,

oppressions, and crimes which henceforth will press upon England will be imputed to you if you do not obviate them now by accepting the pastoral office.' Placed in these difficulties Anselm turns to two monks that were with him, Baldwin and Eustace, and said to them—'Ah, brothers, why do you not help me?' He said this (before God I lie not) in such a state of anxiety, as he was wont to affirm, that if he had then been given his choice, he would (but for reverence to the will of God) gladly have preferred to die rather than be promoted to the archbishopric. Baldwin therefore replied—'If it be the will of God that it should be so, shall we oppose His will?' These words were followed by tears, and the tears by an effusion of blood from his nostrils, showing plainly to every one from what condition of heart the words proceeded. Hearing this answer, Anselm said, 'Alas, how soon your staff is broken!' The king, therefore, perceiving that all his labour was in vain, ordered them all to fall at his feet, if by any means they could gain his consent. But when they fell, he fell too before the king's feet, nor would he be moved from his first intention. But they being provoked at him, and accusing each other of sloth for the delay which they had suffered in meeting his objections, cried out, 'Bring the pastoral staff, the pastoral staff!' And seizing his right arm, some dragged, some pushed him to the king's bed-side. The king delivered the staff to him, but he clenched his hand and refused to take it by any means. The bishops attempted to raise his fingers, so as to get the staff put into his hand, but having spent some time in vain in this effort, and he complaining of the injury done him, at length they got the forefinger raised, which he immediately bent back again, and the staff was placed in his closed hand, and was held down and retained in it by the hands of the bishops. The multitude exclaimed, 'Long live the bishop, long live the bishops and clergy!' They began to chant the *Te Deum*, and carried, rather than led, the elect archbishop into the neighbouring church, he resisting all that he could, and saying, 'It is naught that you do, it is naught.' The usual ceremonies being performed, Anselm returns to the king and says to him—'I tell you, lord king, that in this illness you will not die, and for this reason I wish you to know how you may well correct what has now been done about me, because I never granted, nor do I grant, that it is valid.' This said, he turned back and

departed from him. But the bishops and all the nobility leading him away, he passed out of the chamber. Then turning to them, he broke out in these words: ‘Do you know what it is you attempt? You propose to yoke an untamed bull and an old and feeble sheep together in one yoke to the plough. And what will come of it? The untameable fierceness of the bull will so tear the sheep, dragging it hither and thither through thorns and brambles, that though fruitful in wool, milk, and lambs, if it do not throw off the yoke, it will be unable to yield any of these things, and will be no longer of any service, either to itself or any one else. You have acted unwisely. Have regard to the plough of the Church, as the Apostle says (1 Cor. iii. 9), “Ye are God’s husbandry, God’s building.” This plough in England two specially strong oxen draw and govern, the king and the Archbishop of Canterbury—the one in secular justice and dominion, the other in divine teaching and authority. One of these oxen, Archbishop Lanfranc, is dead; the other, with the untameable ferocity of a bull, is now found in possession of the plough, and you, instead of the dead ox, wish to yoke me, an old feeble sheep, with the untamed bull!’ With these and other words, unable to disguise his grief of heart he burst into tears and went to his own home.

JAMES GAIRDNER: *Early Chroniclers of Europe: England.*

ORDERICUS VITALIS: VALEDICTION

C.H.E.L. I. 163–164. ‘Ordericus Vitalis, the son of Norman parents, but born in Shropshire in 1075, was a writer of much more ambitious scope than Eadmer. His voluminous *Ecclesiastical History...* extends from the beginning of the Christian era down to the year 1141.... It is a characteristic product of the cloister.’ But Orderic records much information about worldly affairs, and he is one of the best authorities for the Norman period. The following autobiographical passage occurs in the thirteenth (and last) book of his *History*.

Behold, worn out with age and infirmity, I desire to end my work, and for many reasons prudence requires it. For I am now [1141] passing the sixty-seventh year of my age in the worship of my Lord Jesus Christ, and while I see the foremost men of this world crushed by heavy disasters of the most opposite sort,

I dance for joy, in the safe estate of obedience and poverty. There is Stephen, king of the English, sighing in prison; and Lewis, king of the French, leading an expedition against the Goths and Gascons, is vexed with many and frequent cares. There is the church of Lisieux, whose bishop is dead, and which is without a pastor; moreover, when it will have one, and of what sort, I know not. What shall I say more? Amid these things, I turn my speech to thee, O Almighty God, and with double force beseech thy goodness that thou wouldest have mercy on me. I give thee thanks, O King most high, who didst freely make me, and hast ordered my years according to thy good pleasure. For thou art my King and my God, and I am thy servant and the son of thine handmaid, who, from the first days of my life, according to my power, have served thee. For on Easter eve I was baptised at Attingesham [Atcham], which village is in England on the Severn, that great river of Severn. There, by the ministry of Ordric the priest, thou didst regenerate me by water and the Holy Ghost, and didst put upon me the name of that same priest, my god-father. Then, when I was five years old, I was delivered over to school in the city of Shrewsbury, and there I offered to thee the first services of clerkship in the church of the holy apostles, St Peter and St Paul. There Sigward, the famous priest, taught me for five years the letters of Carmenta Nicostrata [the alphabet], and broke me in to psalms and hymns and other necessary instructions; meanwhile, thou didst exalt the aforesaid church, built on the river Mole, which belonged to my father, and by the pious devotion of Count Roger didst build there a venerable monastery. It did not seem fit to thee that I should longer be thy soldier there, lest with my relations, who often to thy servants are a burden and hindrance, I should suffer some disquiet, or run into some loss in the fulfilment of thy law through the carnal affection of my relations. Therefore, O glorious God, who didst command Abraham to go forth from his country and his father's house and kindred, thou didst put into the heart of Odeler my father to give up all his claim in me, and to put me absolutely under thy yoke. So he delivered me to Rainald the monk, a weeping father his weeping child, and for the love of thee appointed me to banishment: and he never saw me afterwards. Young boy as I was, I took not on me to dispute my father's wishes, but in everything I willingly assented, for he

had promised on his part that, if I would become a monk, I should after my death possess Paradise with the innocent. Gladly was this engagement made between me and thee, my father being its minister; and I left behind my native country and my parents and all my kin, and my acquaintance and friends; and they, weeping and bidding me farewell, with loving prayers, commended me to thee, O most high Lord God. Hear their supplications, I beseech thee, and graciously grant what they desired, O merciful King of Sabaoth.

So being ten years old I crossed the British Sea, and came an exile to Normandy, where, unknown to all, I knew no man. Like Joseph in Egypt, I heard a strange language. Yet by the help of thy favour, among these strangers I found all gentleness and friendliness. In the eleventh year of my age, I was received to the monastic life by the venerable Abbot Mainer, in the monastery of Ouche, and on Sunday, the 21st of September [1085], I was tonsured after the manner of clerks, and for my English name, which sounded harsh to Normans, the name of Vitalis was given me, borrowed from one of the companions of St Maurice the martyr, whose martyrdom was at that time celebrated [Sept. 22]. In this house for fifty-six years, by thy favour, have I had my conversation, and by all the brethren and dwellers in it I have been loved and honoured much more than I deserved. Heat and cold and the burden of the day have I endured, labouring among thine own in the ‘vineyard of Sorech’; and the ‘penny’ which thou hast promised I have confidently waited for, for thou art faithful. Six abbots have I reverenced as my fathers and masters, because they were in thy place: Mainer and Serlo, Roger and Garin, Richard and Ranulf. They were the lawful heads of the convent of Ouche; for me and for others they kept watch, as those who must give account; within and abroad they used good husbandry, and, with thee for their companion and helper, provided all things necessary for us.

On March 15 [1091], when I was sixteen years old, at the bidding of Serlo, our abbot-elect, Gilbert, Bishop of Lisieux, ordained me sub-deacon. Then after two years, on the 26th of March [1093], Serlo, Bishop of Séez, laid on me the office of deacon, in which grade I gladly ministered to thee fifteen years. Lastly, in the thirty-third year of my age, William, Archbishop of Rouen, on the 21st of December [1107] laid on me the

burden of the priesthood. On the same day, he ordained 244 deacons and 120 priests, with whom, in the Holy Ghost, I devoutly approached thy holy altar, and have now for thirty-four years faithfully performed thy service unto thee with a willing mind.

translated by R. W. CHURCH: *St Anselm.*

WILLIAM OF MALMESBURY

C. H. E. L. I. 164–166. ‘Contemporary with Eadmer and Orderic, William of Malmesbury is a much greater historian, and, to the literary student, a far more attractive writer than either. Milton’s opinion, that “both for style and judgment” William is “by far the best writer of all” the twelfth century chroniclers, still holds good....William’s chronicle is in two parts. The first, divided into five books, is called a *History of the Kings of England*, and extends from A.D. 449 to 1127. The second part, entitled *Historia Novella*... is in three books, and brings the narrative down to the year 1142.’

THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM

In the fourth year, then, of the expedition to Jerusalem, the third after the capture of Nice, and the second after that of Antioch, the Franks laid siege to Jerusalem,—a city well able to repay the toils of war, to soothe its labours, and to requite the fondest expectation. It was now the seventh day of June, nor were the besiegers apprehensive of wanting food or drink for themselves, as the harvest was on the ground, and the grapes were ripe upon the vines; the care alone of their cattle distressed them, which, from the nature of the place and of the season, had no running stream to support them, for the heat of the sun had dried up the secret springs of the brook Siloah, which, at uncertain periods, used to shed abroad its refreshing waters. This brook, when at any time swollen with rain, increases that of Kedron; and then passes on, with bubbling current, into the valley of Jehoshaphat. But this is extremely rare; for there is no certain period of its augmentation or decrease. In consequence, the enemy, suddenly darting from their caverns, frequently killed our people, when straggling abroad for the purpose of watering the cattle. In the meantime the chiefs were each observant at their respective posts, and Raymond actively employed before the tower of David. This fortress, defending the city on the west, and strengthened, nearly half-way up, by

courses of squared stone soldered with lead, repels every fear of invaders when guarded by a small party within. As they saw, therefore, that the city was difficult to carry on account of the steep precipices, the strength of the walls, and the fierceness of the enemy, they ordered engines to be constructed. But before this, indeed, on the seventh day of the siege, they had tried their fortune by erecting ladders, and hurling swift arrows against their opponents: but, as the ladders were few, and perilous to those who mounted them, since they were exposed on all sides and nowhere protected from wounds, they changed their design. There was one engine which we call the Sow, the ancients, Vinea; because the machine, which is constructed of slight timbers, the roof covered with boards and wickerwork, and the sides defended with undressed hides, protects those who are within it, who, after the manner of a sow, proceed to undermine the foundations of the walls. There was another, which, for want of timber, was but a moderate sized tower, constructed after the manner of houses: they call it Berefreid: this was intended to equal the walls in height. The making of this machine delayed the siege, on account of the unskilfulness of the workmen and the scarcity of the wood. And now the fourteenth day of July arrived, when some began to undermine the wall with the sows, others to move forward the tower. To do this more conveniently, they took it towards the works in separate pieces, and, putting it together again at such a distance as to be out of bowshot, advanced it on wheels nearly close to the wall. In the meantime, the slingers with stones, the archers with arrows, and the cross-bow-men with bolts, each intent on his own department, began to press forward and dislodge their opponents from the ramparts; soldiers, too, unmatched in courage, ascended the tower, waging nearly equal war against the enemy with missile weapons and with stones. Nor, indeed, were our foes at all remiss; but trusting their whole security to their valour, they poured down grease and burning oil upon the tower, and slung stones on the soldiers, rejoicing in the completion of their desires by the destruction of multitudes. During the whole of that day the battle was such that neither party seemed to think they had been worsted; on the following, which was the fifteenth of July, the business was decided. For the Franks, becoming more experienced from the event of the attack of the preceding day,

threw faggots flaming with oil on a tower adjoining the wall, and on the party who defended it, which, blazing by the action of the wind, first seized the timber and then the stones, and drove off the garrison. Moreover the beams which the Turks had left hanging down from the walls in order that, being forcibly drawn back, they might, by their recoil, batter the tower in pieces in case it should advance too near, were by the Franks dragged to them, by cutting away the ropes; and being placed from the engine to the wall, and covered with hurdles, they formed a bridge of communication from the ramparts to the tower. Thus what the infidels had contrived for their defence became the means of their destruction; for then the enemy, dismayed by the smoking masses of flame and by the courage of our soldiers, began to give way. These advancing on the wall, and thence into the city, manifested the excess of their joy by the strenuousness of their exertions. This success took place on the side of Godfrey and of the two Roberts; Raymond knew nothing of the circumstance, till the cry of the fugitives and the alarm of the people, throwing themselves from the walls, who thus met death while flying from it, acquainted him that the city was taken. On seeing this, he rushed with drawn sword on the runaways, and hastened to avenge the injuries of God, until he had satiated his own animosity. Moreover, adverting to the advantages of quiet for the moment, he sent unhurt to Ascalon five hundred Ethiopians, who, retreating to the citadel of David, had given up the keys of the gates under promise of personal safety. There was no place of refuge for the Turks, so indiscriminately did the insatiable rage of the victors sweep away both the suppliant and the resisting. Ten thousand were slain in the temple of Solomon; more were thrown from the tops of the churches, and of the citadel. After this, the dead bodies were heaped and dissolved into the airy fluid by means of fire; lest putrefying in the open air, they should pour contagion on the heavy atmosphere. The city being thus expiated by the slaughter of the infidels, they proceeded with hearts contrite and bodies prostrate to the sepulchre of the Lord, which they had so long earnestly sought after, and for which they had undergone so many labours. By what ample incense of prayer, they propitiated heaven, or by what repentant tears they once again brought back the favour of God, none, I am confident, can describe; no, not

if the splendid eloquence of the ancients could revive or Orpheus himself return; who, as it is said, bent e'en the listening rocks to his harmonious strain. Be it imagined then, rather than expressed.

So remarkable was the example of forbearance exhibited by the chiefs, that, neither on that, nor on the following day, did any of them, through lust of spoil, withdraw his mind from following up the victory. Tancred alone, beset with ill-timed covetousness, carried off some valuable effects from the temple of Solomon; but, afterwards, reproved by his own conscience, and the address of some other persons, he restored, if not the same things, yet such as were of equal value. At that time, if any man, however poor, seized a house, or riches of any kind, he did not afterwards encounter the brawlings of the powerful, but held, what he had once possessed, as his hereditary right. Without delay, then, Godfrey, that brilliant mirror of Christian nobility, in which, as in a splendid ceiling, the lustre of every virtue was reflected, was chosen king; all, in lively hope, agreeing, that they could in no wise better consult the advantage of the church; deferring, in the meantime, the election of a patriarch, who was to be appointed by the determination of the Roman Pontiff.

But the emperor of Babylon, not the city built by Nimrod and enlarged by Semiramis and now said to be deserted, but that which Cambyses, son of Cyrus, built in Egypt, on the spot where Taphnis formerly stood: the emperor of Babylon, I say, venting his long-conceived indignation against the Franks, sent the commander of his forces, to drive them, as he said, out of his kingdom. Hastening to fulfil the command, when he heard that Jerusalem was taken, he redoubled his diligence, though he had by no means been indolent before. The design of the barbarian was to besiege the Christians in Jerusalem, and after the victory, which he, falsely presaging, already obtained in imagination, to destroy utterly the sepulchre of our Lord. The Christians, who desired nothing less than again to endure the miseries of a siege, taking courage through God's assistance, march out of the city towards Ascalon, to oppose the enemy; and carry with them part of the cross of Christ, which a certain Syrian, an inhabitant of Jerusalem, had produced, as it had been preserved in his house, in succession from father to son. This truly was a fortunate and a loyal device, that the secret should

be all along kept from the Turks. Obtaining moreover a great booty of sheep and cattle, near Ascalon, they issued a general order, to leave the whole of it in the open plain, lest it should be an impediment when engaging the next morning, as they would have spoil more than enough if they conquered, so that, free from incumbrance, they might avenge the injuries of heaven. In the morning, therefore, as the army was on its march, you might see, I believe by divine instinct, the cattle with their heads erect, proceeding by the side of the soldiers, and not to be driven away by any force. The enemy perceiving this at a distance, and their sight being dazzled by the rays of the sun, lost their confidence, ere the battle could commence, as they thought the multitude of their opponents was countless: yet were they, themselves, by no means deficient in numbers, and by long exercise, trained to battle. They endeavoured therefore to hem in the Franks, who were proceeding at a slow rate, by dividing their force into two bodies, and by curving their wings. But the leaders, and more especially Robert the Norman, who was in the advanced guard, eluding stratagem by stratagem, or rather cunning by valour, led on their archers and infantry, and broke through the centre of the heathens. Moreover the Lorraine cavalry, which was stationed with its commander in the rear, advancing by the flanks, prevented their flight, and occupied the whole plain. Thus the Turks, penetrated in the front, and hemmed in on every side, were slain at the pleasure of the victors; the remainder escaping through favour of approaching night. Many golden utensils were found in their camp; many jewels, which, though from their scarcity unknown in our country, there shine in native splendour. Nor was there ever a more joyful victory for the Christians, because they obtained the most precious spoil without loss.

Returning therefore to Jerusalem, when, by a rest of many days, they had recruited their strength, some of them, sighing for their native country, prepared to return by sea. Godfrey and Tancred only remained; princes truly noble, and to whose glory posterity, if it judge rightly, never can set limits: men, who, from the intense cold of Europe, plunged into the insupportable heat of the East: prodigal of their own lives, so that they could succour suffering Christianity; who, besides the fears of barbarous incursions, in constant apprehension from the un-

wholesomeness of an unknown climate, despised the security of rest and of health in their own country; and although very few in number, kept in subjection so many hostile cities by their reputation and prowess. They were memorable patterns, too, of trust in God; not hesitating to remain in that climate, where they might either suffer from pestilential air, or be slain by the rage of the Saracens. Let the celebration of the poets then give way; nor let ancient fiction extol her earliest heroes. No age hath produced aught comparable to the fame of these men. For, if the ancients had any merit, it vanished after death with the smoke of their funeral pile; because it had been spent rather on the vapour of earthly reputation, than in the acquisition of substantial good. But the utility of these men's valour will be felt, and its dignity acknowledged, as long as the world shall continue to revolve, or pure Christianity to flourish. What shall I say of the good order and forbearance of the whole army? There was no gluttony; no lewdness, which was not directly corrected by the authority of the commanders, or the preaching of the bishops. There was no wish to plunder as they passed through the territories of the Christians; no controversy among themselves, which was not easily settled by the examination of mediators. Wherefore, since the commendation of an army so well-ordered redounds to the glory of its conductors, I will signalize, in my narrative, the exploits and the adventures of each respective chief; nor will I subtract any thing from the truth, as I received it on the faith of my relators. But let no one who has had a fuller knowledge of these events, accuse me of want of diligence, since we, who are secluded on this side of the British ocean, hear but the faint echo of Asiatic transactions.

translated by J. A. GILES: *William of Malmesbury's Chronicle of the Kings of England.*

GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH

C. H. E. L. I. 168–171. To the historian Geoffrey Arthur or Geoffrey of Monmouth, Bishop of St Asaph, may be given the dubious title of ‘Father of English Fiction’; for his *Historia Regum Britanniae* is more remarkable for its romance than for its facts. Just as ancient mapmakers on their Afric downs placed elephants for want of towns, so Geoffrey filled the blank spaces of pre-Christian and early-Christian British history with imperishable stories alleged to be derived from ‘a most ancient book in the British tongue’ providentially supplied to him by Walter, archdeacon of Oxford. To Geoffrey’s romantic borrowings or inventions we owe our acquaintance with Brutus the Trojan, King of Britain, with Lear and his daughters, with Cymbeline, with Bladud and King Lud, with Locrine and Sabrina, and with Merlin and King Arthur. The view taken of Geoffrey by contemporary chroniclers may be gathered from the assertion of Giraldus that, whereas a copy of the gospels placed on the breast of an afflicted man drove away the devils of lying that tormented him, a copy of Geoffrey’s history brought them with greater numbers and pertinacity—the most significant circumstance being that they thronged thickest upon the book itself. But possibly this is the voice of envy; for Gerald was a little in the line of romance himself. The *History* appeared about 1136 and naturally became the most popular work of its time. The extracts that follow represent Geoffrey’s non-Arthurian stories. The Arthurian part of his work is dealt with later. See also pp. 181–188.

(a) LOCRINE AND SABRINA

Now Ignoge, the wife of Brute, bare unto him three sons of high renown, whose names were Locrine, Albanact and Camber. When their father departed this life in the twenty-fourth year after his arrival, they buried him within the city that he had builded, and divided the realm of Britain amongst themselves, each succeeding him in his share therein. Locrine, that was eldest born, had the midland part of the island, which in later days was called Loegria, after his name. Next, Camber had that part which lieth beyond the river Severn, and is now called Wales, which afterward was for a long time called Cambria, after his name; whence unto this day do the folk of the country call them Cymry in the British tongue. But Albanact, the youngest, had the country which in these days in our tongue is called Scotland, and gave it the name of Albany, after his own. And after that these had of a long time reigned in peace and concord, Humber, the King of the Huns, landed in Albany, and engaging in battle with Albanact, slew him, and compelled the country folk to flee unto Locrine.

Locrine, accordingly, when he heard the rumour, besought his brother Camber to accompany him, called out the whole youth of the country, and went to meet the King of the Huns in the neighbourhood of the river Humber. When the armies met, he compelled Humber to flee, but when he had fled as far as the river, it chanced that he was drowned therein, and thus left his name to the stream. Locrine, therefore, after he had won the victory, distributed the spoil among his comrades, keeping nothing for himself save the gold and silver that he found in the enemy's ships. He also kept for himself three damsels of marvellous beauty, whereof one was the daughter of a certain King of Germany, whom the foresaid Humber had seized along with the two other damsels when he laid waste her father's country. Her name was Estrildis, and so fair was she that scarce might any be found to compare with her for beauty, for no polished ivory, nor newly-fallen snow, nor no lilies could surpass the whiteness of her flesh. Taken with love of her, Locrine would fain that she should share his bed, and that the marriage-torch should be lighted to celebrate their wedding. But when Corineus found out what he was minded to do he was wroth beyond measure, for that Locrine had pledged himself to marry Corineus' own daughter.

He came accordingly unto the King, and brandishing his battle-axe in his right hand, spake unto him on this wise: 'Be these the wages, Locrine, that thou wouldest pay me for the wounds I have suffered in thy father's service when he was warring against unknown peoples, that you disdain my daughter and stoop to yoke you with a barbarian woman? If this indeed be so, thou dost it on peril of my vengeance, so long as any strength is left in this right hand, which hath quenched the delight of life in so many giants on the Tyrrhene shores.' Shouting these words aloud again and yet again, he brandished the axe as if about to strike him, when the friends of both flung themselves betwixt. And after that Corineus were somewhat appeased, they compelled Locrine to perform that which he had pledged him to do.

Locrine accordingly married Corineus' daughter, Gwendolen by name; yet, natheless did he not forget the love he bare unto Estrildis. Wherefore, in the city of Trinovant, did he make fashion a chamber underground wherein he enclosed her, and

caused her be right honourably served of the attendants of his household, for that he was minded to keep his love of her secret. For he was sore troubled by reason of his dread of Corineus, so that he durst not hold her openly, but, as hath been said already, kept her in hiding, and seven whole years did haunt her in secret, so that none knew thereof save only they that were the closest of his familiars. For, so often as he was minded to go unto her, he would feign that he made hidden sacrifice unto his gods, whereby he did lightly move others to believe the same, albeit in truth it were no such thing. In the meantime, Estrildis did become great with child, and brought forth a daughter of marvellous beauty, whom she called Sabrina. Gwendolen also became pregnant and bare a son, unto whom was given the name of Maddan. This son was delivered into the charge of his grandfather Corineus, and had of him his teachings and nurture.

Years later, after Corineus was dead, Locrine deserted Gwendolen and raised Estrildis to be Queen. Gwendolen thereupon, being beyond measure indignant, went into Cornwall, and gathering together all the youth of that kingdom, began to harass Locrine by leading forays into his land. At last, after both had mustered their armies, a battle was fought on the river Stour, and Locrine, smitten by an arrow, lost his life and all the joys thereof. Whereupon Gwendolen laid hold on the helm of state, maddened by the same revengeful fury as her father, insomuch as that she bade Estrildis and Sabrina her daughter be flung into the river that is now called Severn, issuing an edict throughout all Britain that the river should be called by the damsel's name. For she was minded that it should bear her name for ever, for that it was her own husband that begat her; whereby it cometh to pass that even unto this day the river in the British tongue is called Sabren, which by corruption in other speech is called Severn.

(b) KING LEAR

When Bladud was thus given over to the destinies, his son Lear was next raised to the kingdom, and ruled the country after manly fashion for threescore years. He it was that builded the city on the river Soar, that in the British is called Kaerleir, but in the Saxon, Leicester. Male issue was denied unto him, his only children being three daughters named Goneril, Regan

and Cordelia, whom all he did love with marvellous affection, but most of all the youngest born, to wit, Cordelia. And when that he began to be upon the verge of eld, he thought to divide his kingdom amongst them, and to marry them unto such husbands as were worthy to have them along with their share of the kingdom. But that he might know which of them was most worthy of the largest share, he went unto them to make inquiry of each as to which of them did most love himself. When, accordingly, he asked of Goneril how much she loved him, she first called all the gods of heaven to witness that her father was dearer to her heart than the very soul that dwelt within her body. Unto whom saith her father: ‘For this, that thou hast set mine old age before thine own life, thee, my dearest daughter, will I marry unto whatsoever youth shall be thy choice, together with the third part of Britain.’ Next, Regan, that was second, fain to take ensample of her sister and to wheedle her father into doing her an equal kindness, made answer with a solemn oath that she could no otherwise express her thought than by saying that she loved him better than all the world beside. The credulous father thereupon promised to marry her with the same dignity as her elder sister, with another third part of the kingdom for her share. But the last, Cordelia, when she saw how her father had been cajoled by the flatteries of her sisters who had already spoken, and desiring to make trial of him otherwise, went on to make answer unto him thus: ‘Father mine, is there a daughter anywhere that presumeth to love her father more than a father? None such, I trow, there is that durst confess as much, save she were trying to hide the truth in words of jest. For myself, I have ever loved thee as a father, nor never from that love will I be turned aside. Albeit that thou art bent on wringing more from me, yet hearken to the true measure of my love. Ask of me no more, but let this be mine answer: So much as thou hast, so much art thou worth, and so much do I love thee.’ Thereupon forthwith, her father, thinking that she had thus spoken out of the abundance of her heart, waxed mightily indignant, nor did he tarry to make known what his answer would be. ‘For that thou hast so despised thy father’s old age that thou hast disdained to love me even as well as these thy sisters love me, I also will disdain thee, nor never in my realm shalt thou have share with thy sisters. Howbeit, sith that thou art my daughter, I say not but

that I will marry thee upon terms of some kind unto some stranger that is of other land than mine, if so be that fortune shall offer such an one; only be sure of this, that never will I trouble me to marry thee with such honour as thy sisters, inasmuch as, whereas up to this time I have loved thee better than the others, it now seemeth that thou lovest me less than they.'

Straightway thereupon, by counsel of the nobles of the realm, he giveth the twain sisters unto two Dukes, of Cornwall, to wit, and Albany, together with one moiety only of the island so long as he should live, but after his death he willed that they should have the whole of the kingdom of Britain. Now it so fell out about this time that Aganippus, King of the Franks, hearing report of Cordelia's beauty, forthwith despatched his envoys to the King, beseeching him that Cordelia might be entrusted to their charge as his bride whom he would marry with due rite of the wedding-torch. But her father, still persisting in his wrath, made answer that right willingly would he give her, but that needs must it be without land or fee, seeing that he had shared his kingdom along with all his gold and silver betwixt Cordelia's sisters Goneril and Regan. When this word was brought unto Aganippus, for that he was on fire with love of the damsel, he sent again unto King Lear saying that enow had he of gold and silver and other possessions, for that one-third part of Gaul was his, and that he was fain to marry the damsel only that he might have sons by her to inherit his land. So at last the bargain was struck, and Cordelia was sent to Gaul to be married unto Aganippus.

Some long time after, when Lear began to wax more sluggish by reason of age, the foresaid Dukes, with whom and his two daughters he had divided Britain, rebelled against him and took away from him the realm and the kingly power which up to that time he had held right manfully and gloriously. Howbeit, concord was restored, and one of his sons-in-law, Maglaunus, Duke of Albany, agreed to maintain him with threescore knights, so that he should not be without some semblance of state. But after that he had sojourned with his son-in-law two years, his daughter Goneril began to wax indignant at the number of his knights, who flung gibes at her servants for that their rations were not more plentiful. Whereupon, after speaking to her husband, she ordered her father to be content with a service

of thirty knights and to dismiss the other thirty that he had. The King, taking this in dudgeon, left Maglaunus, and betook him to Henvin, Duke of Cornwall, unto whom he had married his other daughter. Here, at first, he was received with honour, but a year had not passed before discord again arose betwixt those of the King's household and those of the Duke's, insomuch as that Regan, waxing indignant, ordered her father to dismiss all his company save five knights only to do him service. Her father, beyond measure aggrieved thereat, returned once more to his eldest daughter, thinking to move her to pity and to persuade her to maintain himself and his retinue. Howbeit, she had never renounced her first indignation, but swore by all the gods of Heaven that never should he take up his abode with her save he contented himself with the service of a single knight and were quit of all the rest. Moreover, she upbraided the old man for that, having nothing of his own to give away, he should be minded to go about with such a retinue; so that finding she would not give way to his wishes one single tittle, he at last obeyed and remained content with one knight only, leaving the rest to go their way. But when the remembrance of his former dignity came back unto him, bearing witness to the misery of the estate to which he was now reduced, he began to bethink him of going to his youngest daughter oversea. Howbeit, he sore misdoubted that she would do nought for him, seeing that he had held her, as I have said, in such scanty honour in the matter of her marriage. Nathless, disdaining any longer to endure so mean a life, he betook him across the Channel into Gaul. But when he found that two other princes were making the passage at the same time, and that he himself had been assigned but the third place, he brake forth into tears and sobbing, and cried aloud: 'Ye destinies that do pursue your wonted way marked out by irrevocable decree, wherefore was it your will ever to uplift me to happiness so fleeting? For a keener grief it is to call to mind that lost happiness than to suffer the presence of the unhappiness that cometh after. For the memory of the days when in the midst of hundreds of thousands of warriors I went to batter down the walls of cities and to lay waste the provinces of mine enemies is more grievous unto me than the calamity that hath overtaken me in the meanness of mine estate, which hath incited them that but now were grovelling under my feet

to desert my feebleness. O angry fortune! will the day ever come wherein I may requite the evil turn that hath thus driven forth the length of my days and my poverty? O Cordelia, my daughter, how true were the words wherein thou didst make answer unto me, when I did ask of thee how much thou didst love me! For thou saidst, So much as thou hast so much art thou worth, and so much do I love thee. So long, therefore, as I had that which was mine own to give, so long seemed I of worth unto them that were the lovers, not of myself but of my gifts. They loved me at times, but better loved they the presents I made unto them. Now that the presents are no longer forthcoming, they too have gone their ways. But with what face, O thou dearest of my children, shall I dare appear before thee? I who, wroth with thee for these thy words, was minded to marry thee less honourably than thy sisters, who, after all the kindnesses I have conferred upon them have allowed me to become an outcast and a beggar?"

Landing at last, his mind filled with these reflections and others of a like kind, he came to Karitia, where his daughter lived, and waiting without the city, sent a messenger to tell her into what indigence he had fallen, and to beseech his daughter's compassion inasmuch as he had neither food nor clothing. On hearing the tidings, Cordelia was much moved and wept bitterly. When she made inquiry how many armed men he had with him, the messenger told her that he had none save a single knight, who was waiting with him without the city. Then took she as much gold and silver as was needful and gave it unto the messenger, bidding him take her father to another city, where he should bathe him, clothe him and nurse him, feigning that he was a sick man. She commanded also that he should have a retinue of forty knights well appointed and armed, and that then he should duly announce his arrival to Aganippus and herself. The messenger accordingly forthwith attended King Lear into another city, and hid him there in secret until that he had fully accomplished all that Cordelia had borne him on hand to do.

As soon, therefore, as he was meetly arrayed in kingly apparel and invested with the ensigns of royalty and a train of retainers, he sent word unto Aganippus and his daughter that he had been driven out of the realm of Britain by his sons-in-law, and had come unto them in order that by their assistance he might be

able to recover his kingdom. They accordingly, with the great counsellors and nobles, came forth to receive him with all honour, and placed in his hands the power over the whole of Gaul until such time as they had restored him unto his former dignity.

In the meanwhile, Aganippus sent envoys throughout the whole of Gaul to summon every knight bearing arms therein to spare no pains in coming to help him to recover the kingdom of Britain for his father-in-law, King Lear. When they had all made them ready, Lear led the assembled host together with Aganippus and his daughter into Britain, fought a battle with his sons-in-law, and won the victory, again bringing them all under his own dominion. In the third year thereafter he died, and Aganippus died also, and Cordelia, now mistress of the helm of state in Britain, buried her father in a certain underground chamber which she had bidden be made under the river Soar at Leicester. This underground chamber was founded in honour of the two-faced Janus, and there, when the yearly celebration of the day came round, did all the workmen of the city set hand unto such work as they were about to be busied upon throughout the year.

translated by SEBASTIAN EVANS: *Histories of the Kings of Britain by Geoffrey of Monmouth.*

RICHARD OF DEVIZES

C. H. E. L. I. 175-176. The First Crusade 'has been described by several chroniclers, but by none more graphically than by a monkish writer whose *History of King Richard I* is one of the briefest of the many contemporary narratives penned in the twelfth century. Its author, Richard of Devizes, has, however, stamped upon his modest essay in history the impress of a personality which is altogether absent from many more ambitious productions.'

(a) RICHARD SAILS TO MESSINA

The ships which the king found already prepared on the shore were one hundred in number, and fourteen busses, vessels of very great magnitude and admirable swiftness, strong vessels and very sound, whereof this was the equipage and appointment. The first of the ships had three spare rudders, thirteen anchors, thirty oars, two sails, three sets of ropes of all kinds, and besides these double whatever a ship can want, except the mast and the

ship's boat. There is appointed to the ship's command a most experienced steersman, and fourteen subordinate attendants picked for the service are assigned him. The ship is freighted with forty horses of value, trained to arms, and with arms of all kinds for as many horsemen, and forty foot, and fifteen sailors, and with an entire year's provisions for as many men and horses. There was one appointment for all the ships, but each of the busses received a double appointment and freight. The king's treasure, which was very great and inestimable, was divided amongst the ships and busses, that if one part should experience danger, the rest might be saved. All things being thus arranged, the king himself, with a small household, and the chief men of his army, with his attendants, having quitted the shore, advanced before the fleet in galleys, and being daily entertained by maritime towns, taking along with them the larger ships and busses of that sea, arrived prosperously at Messina. So great was the splendour of the approaching armament, such the clashing and brilliancy of their arms, so noble the sound of the trumpets and clarions, that the city quaked and was greatly astounded, and there came to meet the king a multitude of all ages, people without number, wondering and proclaiming with what exceeding glory and magnificence that king had arrived, surpassing the King of France, who, with his forces, had arrived seven days before. And forasmuch as the King of France had been already received into the palace of Tancred, King of Sicily, within the walls, the King of England pitched his camp without the city. The same day, the King of France, knowing of the arrival of his comrade and brother, flies to his reception; nor could their gestures sufficiently express in embraces and kisses how much each of them rejoiced in the other. The armies cheered one another with mutual applause and intercourse, as if so many thousand men had been all of one heart and one mind. In such pastimes is the holiday spent until the evening, and the weary kings departing, although not satiated, return every one to his own quarters.

On the next day, the King of England presently caused gibbets to be erected without the camp to hang thereon thieves and robbers. The judges delegated spared neither sex nor age; the cause of the stranger and the native found the like law and the like punishment. The King of France, whatever transgression

his people committed, or whatever offence was committed against them, took no notice and held his peace; the King of England esteeming the country of those implicated in guilt as a matter of no consequence, considered every man his own, and left no transgression unpunished; wherefore the one was called a Lamb by the Griffones, the other obtained the name of a Lion....

(b) RICHARD BESIEGES MESSINA

The terrible standard of the dragon is borne in front unfurled, while behind the king the sound of the trumpet excites the army. The sun shone brightly on the golden shields, and the mountains were resplendent in their glare; they marched cautiously and orderly, and the affair was managed without show. The Griffones, on the contrary, the city gates being closed, stood armed at the battlements of the walls and towers, as yet fearing nothing, and incessantly discharged their darts upon the enemy. The king, acquainted with nothing better than to take cities by storm and batter forts, let their quivers be emptied first, and then at length made his first assault by his archers who preceded the army. The sky is hidden by the shower of arrows, a thousand darts pierce through the shields spread abroad on the ramparts; nothing could save the rebels against the force of the darts. The walls are left without guard, because no one could look out of doors but he would have an arrow in his eye before he could shut it. In the mean time the king, with his troops, without repulse, freely, and as though with permission, approached the gates of the city, which, with the application of the battering-ram, he forced in an instant, and, having led in his army, took every hold in the city, even to Tancred's palace and the lodgings of the French around their king's quarters, which he spared in respect of the king, his lord. The standards of the victors are planted on the towers through the whole circuit of the city, and each of the surrendered fortifications he entrusted to particular captains of his army, and caused his nobles to take up their quarters in the city.

translated by J. A. GILES:
Chronicles of the Crusades.

JOCELIN OF BRAKELOND: THE ABBOT SAMSON

C. H. E. L. I. 176. ‘Social life in England at the end of the twelfth century...is portrayed with intimate knowledge in the celebrated chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond. Jocelin has had the good fortune...to engage the attention of a brilliant modern writer, and will continue to be known through Carlyle’s *Past and Present* to thousands of readers who will never have the curiosity to read his actual Latin record.’

Abbot Samson was below the average height, almost bald; his face was neither round nor oblong; his nose was prominent and his lips thick; his eyes were clear and his glance penetrating; his hearing was excellent; his eyebrows arched, and frequently shaved; and a little cold soon made him hoarse. On the day of his election he was forty-seven, and had been a monk for seventeen years. In his ruddy beard there were a few grey hairs, and still fewer in his black and curling hair. But in the course of the first fourteen years after his election all his hair became white as snow.

He was an exceedingly temperate man; he possessed great energy and a strong constitution, and was fond both of riding and walking, until old age prevailed upon him and moderated his ardour in these respects. When he heard the news of the capture of the cross and the fall of Jerusalem, he began to wear under garments made of horse-hair, and a horse-hair shirt, and gave up the use of flesh and meat. None the less, he willed that flesh should be placed before him as he sat at table, that the alms might be increased. He ate sweet milk, honey, and similar sweet things, far more readily than any other food.

He hated liars, drunkards, and talkative persons; for virtue ever loves itself and spurns that which is contrary to it. He blamed those who grumbled about their meat and drink, and especially monks who so grumbled, and personally kept to the same manners which he had observed when he was a cloistered monk. Moreover, he had this virtue in himself that he never desired to change the dish which was placed before him. When I was a novice, I wished to prove whether this was really true, and as I happened to serve in the refectory, I thought to place before him food which would have offended any other man, in

a very dirty and broken dish. But when he saw this, he was as it were blind to it. Then, as there was some delay, I repented of what I had done, and straightway seized the dish, changed the food and dish for better, and carried it to him. He, however, was angry at the change, and disturbed.

He was an eloquent man, speaking both French and Latin, but rather careful of the good sense of that which he had to say than of the style of his words. He could read books written in English very well, and was wont to preach to the people in English, but in the dialect of Norfolk where he was born and bred. It was for this reason that he ordered a pulpit to be placed in the church, for the sake of those who heard him and for purposes of ornament.

The abbot further appeared to prefer the active to the contemplative life, and praised good officials more than good monks. He rarely commended anyone solely on account of his knowledge of letters, unless the man happened to have knowledge of secular affairs, and if he chanced to hear of any prelate who had given up his pastoral work and become a hermit, he did not praise him for this. He would not praise men who were too kindly, saying, ‘He who strives to please all men, deserves to please none.’...

He had also a characteristic which I have never seen in any other man, namely, that he had a strong affection for many to whom he never or seldom showed a loving face, which the common saying declares to be usual, when it says, ‘Where love is, there the glance follows.’ And there was another noteworthy thing, that he wittingly suffered loss from his servants in temporal matters, and allowed that he suffered it; but, as I believe, the reason for this was that he waited for a fit season when the matter might be conveniently remedied, or that by concealing his knowledge he might avoid greater loss.

The Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond:
translated by L. CECIL JANE.

MATTHEW PARIS

C.H.E.L. I. 178–181. Matthew Paris was a monk of St Albans, where the Abbot Simon, who died in 1183, had established in the monastery a regular office of historiographer. ‘Matthew Paris became historiographer of St Albans upon the death of Roger of Wendover in 1236, and proceeded in his famous *Chronica Majora* to revise and continue the work of his predecessor. Matthew Paris’s own narrative is an extraordinarily comprehensive and masterly survey of both English and continental history during an entire quarter of a century.’ A thoroughly patriotic and outspoken Englishman, he was, as well, a sound and impartial observer, who, ‘in his conception of the historian’s art and in the force and picturesqueness of his style, surpasses all the chroniclers of the time.’

(a) ENGLAND IN 1236–7

On the 19th of January the king went to Westminster, where an extraordinary solemnity took place on the following day, which was Sunday, at which the king wore his crown and Eleanor was crowned queen. Thus was Henry the Third married at Canterbury, and the nuptials were celebrated in London, at Westminster, on the feast of St Fabian and St Sebastian.

There were assembled at the king’s nuptial festivities such a host of nobles of both sexes, such numbers of religious men, such crowds of the populace, and such a variety of actors, that London, with its capacious bosom, could scarcely contain them. The whole city was ornamented with flags and banners, chaplets and hangings, candles and lamps, and with wonderful devices and extraordinary representations, and all the roads were cleansed from mud and dirt, sticks, and everything offensive. The citizens, too, went out to meet the king and queen, dressed out in their ornaments, and vied with each other in trying the speed of their horses. On the same day, when they left the city for Westminster, to perform the duties of butler to the king (which office belonged to them by right of old, at the coronation), they proceeded thither dressed in silk garments, with mantles worked in gold, and with costly changes of raiment, mounted on valuable horses, glittering with new bits and saddles, and riding in troops arranged in order. They carried with them three hundred and sixty gold and silver cups, preceded by the king’s trumpeters and with horns sounding, so that such a wonderful novelty struck all

who beheld it with astonishment. The archbishop of Canterbury, by the right especially belonging to him, performed the duty of crowning, with the usual solemnities, the bishop of London assisting him as a dean, the other bishops taking their stations according to their rank. In the same way all the abbots, at the head of whom, as was his right, was the abbot of St Alban's (for as the Protomartyr of England, B. Alban, was the chief of all the martyrs of England, so also was his abbot the chief of all the abbots in rank and dignity), as the authentic privileges of that church set forth. The nobles, too, performed the duties, which, by ancient right and custom, pertained to them at the coronations of kings. In like manner some of the inhabitants of certain cities discharged certain duties which belonged to them by right of their ancestors. The earl of Chester carried the sword of St Edward, which was called 'Curtein,' before the king, as a sign that he was earl of the palace, and had by right the power of restraining the king if he should commit an error. The earl was attended by the constable of Chester, and kept the people away with a wand when they pressed forward in a disorderly way. The grand marshal of England, the earl of Pembroke, carried a wand before the king and cleared the way before him both in the church and in the banquet-hall, and arranged the banquet and the guests at table. The wardens of the Cinque Ports carried the pall over the king, supported by four spears, but the claim to this duty was not altogether undisputed. The earl of Leicester supplied the king with water in basins to wash before his meal; the Earl Warrenne performed the duty of king's cupbearer, supplying the place of the earl of Arundel, because the latter was a youth and not as yet made a belted knight. Master Michael Belet was butler *ex officio*; the earl of Hereford performed the duties of marshal of the king's household, and William Beau-champ held the station of almoner. The justiciary of the forests arranged the drinking cups on the table at the king's right hand, although he met with some opposition, which however fell to the ground. The citizens of London passed the wine about in all directions, in costly cups, and those of Winchester superintended the cooking of the feast; the rest, according to the ancient statutes, filled their separate stations, or made their claims to do so. And in order that the nuptial festivities might not be clouded by any disputes, saving the right of any one, many

things were put up with for the time which they left for decision at a more favourable opportunity. The office of chancellor of England, and all the offices connected with the king, are ordained and assized in the Exchequer. Therefore the chancellor, the chamberlain, the marshal, and the constable, by right of their office, took their seats there, as also did the barons, according to the date of their creation, in the city of London, whereby they each knew his own place. The ceremony was splendid, with the gay dresses of the clergy and knights who were present. The abbot of Westminster sprinkled the holy water, and the treasurer, acting the part of sub-dean, carried the paten. Why should I describe all those persons who reverently ministered in the church to God as was their duty? Why describe the abundance of meats and dishes on the table? the quantity of venison, the variety of fish, the joyous sounds of the glee-men, and the gaiety of the waiters? Whatever the world could afford to create pleasure and magnificence was there brought together from every quarter.

About the same time, for two months and more, namely, in January, February, and part of March, such deluges of rain fell as had never been seen before in the memory of any one. About the feast of St Scholastica, when the moon was new, the sea became so swollen by the river torrents which fell into it, that all the rivers, especially those which fell into the sea, rendered the fords impassable, overflowing their banks, hiding the bridges from sight, carrying away mills and dams, and overwhelming the cultivated lands, crops, meadows, and marshes. Amongst other unusual occurrences, the river Thames overflowed its usual bounds, and entered the grand palace at Westminster, where it spread and covered the whole area, so that small boats could float there, and people went to their apartments on horseback. The water also forcing its way into the cellars could with difficulty be drained off. The signs of this storm which preceded it, then gave proofs of their threats; for on the day of St Damasus, thunder was heard, and on the Friday next after the conception of St Mary, a mock sun was seen by the side of the true sun....

About this same time, in the month of May, near an abbacy called Roche, in the northern part of England, there appeared bands of well-armed knights, riding on valuable horses, with standards and shields, coats of mail and helmets, and decorated

with other military equipments: they issued from the earth, as it appeared, and disappeared again into the earth. This vision lasted for several days, and attracted the eyes of those who beheld it, as if by fascination; they rode in arrayed troops, and sometimes engaged in conflict; sometimes as if at a tournament, they shivered their spears into small fragments with a crash; the inhabitants saw them, but more from a distance than near them, for they never remember to have seen such a sight before, and many said that the occurrence was not without its presage. This occurred more plainly in Ireland and its confines, where they appeared as if coming from battle, and dragged their horses after them wounded and broken down, without a rider, and the knights themselves were severely wounded and bloody; and what was more wonderful, their track plainly appeared impressed on the ground, and the grass was borne down and trampled on. Many people on seeing this vision fled before them in alarm, and betook themselves to the churches and castles, thinking that it was not an illusion, but a real battle. These occurrences came to our knowledge some years after they happened, from a report and true account of the event obtained from the earl of Gloucester, and by the evidence of many other persons....

In the summer of this year, after a winter beyond measure rainy, as has been mentioned, a constant drought, attended by an almost unendurable heat, succeeded, which lasted for four months and more. The marshes and lakes were dried up to their very bottoms; water-mills stood uselessly still—the water being dried up; and the earth gaped with numerous fissures; the corn, too, in a great many places scarcely grew to the height of two feet....

On the day after the feast of St Martin, and within the octave of that feast, great inundations of the sea suddenly broke forth by night, and a fierce storm of wind arose, which caused inundations of the rivers as well as of the sea, and in places, especially on the coast, drove the ships from their ports, tearing them from their anchors, drowned great numbers of people, destroyed flocks of sheep, and herds of cattle, tore up trees by the roots, overthrew houses, and ravaged the coast. The sea rose for two days and the intermediate night, a circumstance before unheard of, and did not ebb and flow in its usual way, being impeded (as was said) by the violence of the opposing winds.

The dead bodies of those drowned were seen lying unburied in caves formed by the sea, near the coast, and at Wisbeach and the neighbouring villages, and along the seacoast, an endless number of human beings perished: in one town, and that not a populous one, about a hundred bodies were consigned to the tomb in one day. In the night of Christmas eve, also, a very fierce storm of wind raged, attended by thunder and a deluge of rain, and shook towers and other buildings, and the confusion of the elements rendered the roads and seas impassable. And thus in that year about the equinoctial season, the storm twice repeated ravaged England with irreparable damage. The Lord indeed seemed, owing to the sins of the people, to have sent this flood as a scourge to the earth, and to fulfil the threat contained in the Gospel,—‘There shall be upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring.’...

During all this time, the small fire of the true faith began to die away, so that it was almost reduced to ashes, and seemed scarcely to emit a single spark. For simony was now practised without a blush, and usurers openly, by various arguments, extorted money from the people and from minors; charity expired; the liberty of the church was crushed; religion was trodden upon, and of no value; and the daughter of Sion became, as it were, a shameless harlot without a blush. Illiterate persons, of the lowest class, armed with the bulls of the Roman church, bursting forth into threats, daily presumed, despite of the sacred privileges we enjoy from our holy ancestors, to plunder the revenues left by pious men of old times for the maintenance of religious men, for the support of the poor, and to afford hospitality to pilgrims; and, by thundering forth sentences of excommunication, they at once obtained what they demanded. And if any of the injured or robbed parties resorted to the remedy of appeal, or to the plea of privilege, they immediately suspended and excommunicated them by means of some other prelate, on the authority of a warrant from the pope, and in this way, not by prayers, not canonically, but by imperious extortion, did they rob the simple-minded, according to the saying of the poet,—

Armato supplicat ense potens.

[The man in power begs with a drawn sword.]

Hence it came to pass that, where formerly noble and bountiful clerks, guardians and patrons of churches, used to make them-

selves renowned throughout the whole of the adjacent country, by entertaining travellers and refreshing the poor, there debased men, void of morals, and full of cunning, agents and farmers of the Romans, now scraped together all that was useful and valuable, and transmitted it to foreign countries to their lords, who were living daintily on the patrimony of Christ, and bragging on the possessions of others. Then was to be seen heartfelt grief, the cheeks of the saints became wet with tears, and sighs and complaints were heard to burst forth and multiply, and many said with a sigh, ‘It were better to die than to behold the sufferings of our people and our saints.’ Woe to England! which, once the chief of provinces, mistress of nations, the mirror of the church, and a pattern of religion, is now laid under tribute; ignoble men have trampled her under-foot, and she has fallen a prey to degenerate men. But the manifold offences of the English have brought these scourges on themselves, through the anger of Him, who, for the sins of the people, makes the hypocrite to reign, and the tyrant to bear rule.

translated by J. A. GILES: *Matthew Paris.*

(b) THE HOLY BLOOD

But when [these relics] were being examined, and some, slow of belief, were yet hesitating, then the lord Theodoric, Prior of the Hospitallers, said to the Bishops and others that sat around...‘Why then should all these men of so great reputation have given their testimony to this assertion, appending thereunto their signs manual as manifest pledges of their good faith?’ And his words, though he was an unlearned man, were approved by all, both Bishops and others, that heard them. But now to our purpose again. When the said Bishop [of Norwich] had finished his eloquent sermon, he announced to the exultant crowd that whosoever should assemble to venerate the most holy blood here kept should freely earn, by the gratuitous grant of all prelates who had come hither, an indulgence of one year and 116 days of penance enjoined upon them. And, seeing that some of those present yet hesitated and grunted [*obgrunnirent*]—disputing how our Lord, who on the third day after His passion rose in all fulness and integrity, could have left blood upon this earth—this question was then exactly determined by the Bishop of Lincoln

[Grosseteste], as is written below in my Book of Additions, even as I, who write this page, heard it myself and recorded most plainly word for word, and have marked with this sign. And, while this great and magnificent solemnity proceeded in the Abbey Church, the Lord King sat gloriously on his royal throne, clad in a golden garment of the most precious brocade of Bagdad, and with a slight crown of gold (such as we call *garlanda*) on his head. Then he let summon his own half-brother, with many of his fellows that there bare him company, waiting to be knighted with all due pomp and ceremony; which brother, with others of his fellows, the Lord King girt with his knightly belt amid great rejoicing. And while the King sat on his royal throne aforesaid, seeing me who write this, he called me and bade me sit down on the step which rose between the floor and his throne, saying ‘Hast thou seen all these things, and hast thou firmly impressed them in thy heart?’ Whereunto I made answer ‘Yea, my lord; for it is worthy to be remembered, since this is truly a glorious day here spent.’ Then the King added this also ‘In truth I am assured this day that the Lord hath deigned to work a most glorious miracle, as a foretaste of His more plenteous lovingkindness and of the wonders that will be wrought in future by His grace. This befel at early dawn, and therein do I rejoice. I beseech thee therefore—and, in beseeching thee, I command to boot—to show forth all these things fully and expressly in a clear hand, that they may be indelibly recorded in thy book, and that the memory thereof may never be lost to posterity, even to the remotest ages.’ Moreover he invited me, after these words, to dine, and three of my companions with me. And that same day he commanded that all monks who had come to the ceremony should be feasted at his own expense, in the refectory with the monks of Westminster; and other guests also were there entertained, and most splendidly and ceremoniously were they feasted.

translated by G. G. COULTON: *Social Life in Britain*.

ENGLISH SCHOLARS OF PARIS AND FRANCISCANS OF OXFORD

JOHN OF SALISBURY

C.H.E.L. I. 183–187. The university of Paris owed its origin to the cathedral school of Notre-Dame, famous, with its neighbouring school of Sainte-Geneviève, for the memorable lectures of ‘the eloquent, brilliant, vain, impulsive and self-confident disputant, Abelard (d. 1142). The fame of his teaching made Paris the resort of large numbers of scholars, whose presence led to its becoming the home of the many Masters by whom the university was ultimately founded.’ The first important English pupil of Abelard was John of Salisbury, who studied at Paris and Chartres from 1136 to 1148, and came back to England about 1150. He became secretary to Theobald Archbishop of Canterbury and entered the service of Becket in 1162, shared his master’s troubles, and was said to have been ‘sprinkled with the precious blood of the blessed martyr’ in the cathedral of Canterbury on the fatal 29 December, 1170. Six years later John became Bishop of Chartres. His works include an encyclopaedia of miscellanies called *Policraticus* or *De Nugis Curialium et Vestigiis Philosophorum*, *Metalogicus*, a defence of the method and use of logic, and *Entheticus*, an elegiac poem of 1852 lines. John’s Latin prose has been praised for its classical elegance and correctness. He was a humanist, two centuries in advance of his time (Migne, *Patrol.* cxcix).

THE UNIVERSITY OF PARIS

When, being but a youth, I first went to Gaul for the purpose of study in the year [1136] after the illustrious king of England, Henry, the lion of justice, passed beyond human affairs, I betook myself to the Aristotelian of Palais¹, a famous teacher who at that time was presiding to the admiration of all on Mont Ste Geneviève. There, at his feet, I received the first rudiments of this art [of dialectic] and, so far as my moderate intelligence permitted, whatever fell from his lips I took up with all the avidity of my mind. Then, after his retirement [1136], which seemed to me over hasty, I attached myself to Master Albericus, who shone amongst the rest as a renowned dialectician, and who was in truth a most keen opponent of the school of the Nominalists.

¹ Peter Abelard (1079–1142), born at Palais in Brittany.

For a space of nearly two years thus dwelling upon the Mount, I employed as my teachers Albericus and Master Robert of Melun, as he was called when presiding meritoriously in the schools, although by nationality he was an Englishman. Of these two, Albericus was scrupulous in everything where he found room for question, so that he would discover some small obstacle upon a surface as level as you please; as they say, for him a bulrush was not free from knots. For even there he would demonstrate what ought to be made plain. But Robert, most ready in answering an opponent, never by seeking a subterfuge failed to join issue, but would either choose the contradictory side or, having exposed the complexity of the argument proposed, would teach that the reply to it was not a single one. So that Albericus was subtle and copious in questioning, Robert perspicacious, brief and apt in responding. If there had been any one who united in himself the qualities of these two, his equal would not have been found amongst the disputants of our time. For they were both men of keen intellect and determined perseverance; and in my opinion they might have shone forth as great and pre-eminent men in natural knowledge, if they had relied upon the great base of letters, and had followed in the steps of the ancients as much as they applauded their own inventions. This was true for the time during which I was attached to them. For afterwards, one of them went to Bologna and unlearned what he had taught, and returned and untaught it. Whether this was better, let them judge who heard him before and afterwards. Then the other [Robert], making progress in divine letters, pursued the glory of a more renowned name attached to a more eminent philosophy [*i.e.* theology].

Under these men I was exercised throughout two years [1136-8], and I grew habituated to the marked passages, to the rules and to the other elements of rudimentary learning with which boyish minds are imbued and of which the above-named teachers had the greatest mastery and with which they were very ready, so that I appeared to myself to know all these things as well as I knew my nails and fingers. For I had certainly learned with youthful levity to esteem my knowledge more highly than it deserved. I seemed to myself to be somewhat knowing, because I was ready with what I had heard. Then, looking within and measuring my strength, by the grace of my

teachers, I designedly betook myself to the grammarian [William] of Conches, and hearkened to him teaching for a period of three years (1138-41). In the meanwhile, I read much, nor shall I ever regret that time. After that I followed Richard surnamed Bishop, a man deficient in scarcely one of the disciplines [of the Quadrivium], a man who had more heart than tongue, more knowledge than fluency, more truth than vanity, more virtue than ostentation. What I had heard from others I re-perused as a whole with him and I learned certain matters, not heard hitherto, pertaining to the Quadrivium....I also re-read rhetoric, of which with some other persons I had previously heard somewhat from master Theodoric¹, but with small understanding....

Returning [to Paris] at the end of three years [1141] I found Master Gilbert and heard him in logic and in sacred letters; but he was all too quickly removed. Robert Pullus followed, whose knowledge and course of life equally commended him. Then Simon of Poissy, a trusty lecturer but a rather dull disputant, received me. But these two were my teachers in theology only [1141-8].

Thus almost twelve years slipped away while I was occupied in diverse studies. Wherefore it seemed to be pleasant once again to see old associates whom I had left [in 1138] upon the Mount [Ste Geneviève] and who were still detained there by dialectic, to talk over with them the ambiguities of the old days; so that by mutual conference we might measure our progress. As they had been, and where they had been, I found them still: for they did not seem to have advanced a hand's breadth towards resolving the old questions, nor had they added to them a single petty proposition. They themselves were being goaded by the same incentives with which they urged others; in one thing only had they advanced, they had unlearned measure and knew not moderation, so that indeed one might despair of their recovery. And thus I made trial of what can be clearly deduced, that just as dialectic facilitates other disciplines, so, if it be solitary, it lies bloodless and sterile, nor can it fertilize the soul to bear the fruit of philosophy, if it conceive not from another.

¹ Of Chartres, brother of Bernard.

GIRALDUS CAMBRENSIS

C. H. E. L. I. 176-177, 194-199. Gerald the Welshman—Giraldus Cambrensis (1147-1222?)—of mingled Welsh and Norman blood was a prolific and attractive writer, one of the few men of the time able to transmit his own engaging personality in his works. He studied in Paris and (he assures us) was a model scholar. As archdeacon of Brecon (1175-1203) he was ever a fighter, and strove gallantly though vainly to win for himself and ‘for the honour of Wales’ the bishopric of St Davids. The earliest of Gerald’s works is the *Topography of Ireland* (*Topographica Hibernica*) to which ‘we owe almost all our knowledge of mediaeval Ireland.’ This was followed by the *Conquest of Ireland* (*Expugnatio Hibernica*), a narrative of the events of 1169-85. The *Itinerary of Wales* (*Itinerarium Kambriae*) and *Description of Wales* (*Descriptio Kambriae*) display the special interest in languages that made Freeman call Gerald ‘the father of comparative philology.’ *Gemma Ecclesiastica* may ‘be described as a lengthy archidiaconal charge of an exceptionally learned and lively type. It certainly presents us with a vivid picture of the state of morality and learning in Wales.’ The *Book of his Acts and Deeds* (*De Rebus a se Gestis*) is mainly autobiographical in interest.

ON HIMSELF

Gerald was born in South Wales, on the coast of Demetia, not far from the chief town of Pembroke, namely, at the castle of Manorbier, where his parents were of noble rank. For his mother was Angarath, daughter of Nesta, the noble daughter of Rhys, Prince of South Wales, and his father was the noble William de Barri. Gerald, therefore, being the youngest of four blood-brethren, when his elder brothers in their boyish games were wont, in the sand or the dust, to build castles and cities and palaces, as a prelude to their later life, this Gerald, I say, as a like prelude, ever bent his whole mind to the building of monasteries and churches in play. His father, oftentimes noting and marvelling at this his custom, took it for a prognostic of the future, and determined with wise forethought to set him to letters and liberal studies: moreover with playful praise he was wont to call the boy his ‘little bishop.’

It came to pass one night that the land was troubled by an invasion of enemies, and all the able men of the town rushed in haste to arms. Which, when the boy saw, and when he heard the tumult, he wailed aloud and besought a safe asylum, asking that he might be carried to the church; wherein, with a marvellous spirit of prophecy, he presaged that the peace of the Church and the immunities of God’s House should be most

firm and sure. When all men heard these words of his, the tumult ceased, for they pondered this boy's speech in their hearts, and, discussing among themselves, they recalled with amazement that his words promised them greater safety in this remote church, exposed to the blasts of heaven and to the hazards of chance, than in any city crammed with men and arms and well fortified with towers and walls.... In these first days, therefore, the boy was no little hindered by the companionship of his brethren, who played with him on holidays and extolled with all their might the business of their knightly profession, for a boy's manners are formed by those who dwell with him. Wherefore he was slow indeed to profit by the teaching that they set before him. At length, however, he was much moved by the rebuke and instant correction of the then Bishop of St Davids (who was his own uncle), David, of pious memory; and also by two clerks of the same bishop, one of whom rebuked him by declining the adjective 'durus, durior, durissimus,' and the other 'stultus, stultior, stultissimus,' which insult stirred him deeply, so that he began to profit more through shame than the rod, finding in this disgrace his most efficient preceptor. Afterwards, therefore, he was so wrapped in the vehemence of his studies that within a short time he far surpassed all his schoolfellows of the same age in his native land. In process of time he thrice crossed the sea to France for the sake of further study and profit, and studied in three stages of seven years in liberal learning at Paris, until at length, rivalling the most excellent preceptors, he taught there the Trivium with great success, and won distinguished praise in the art of rhetoric. Wherein he was so entirely given up to study, so utterly devoid of frivolity or buffoonery in his acts or mind that, whosoever the Masters in Arts would give an example of good scholars, they were wont to cite Gerald first of all....

Gerald therefore on his way to England came to Arras in Whitsun week, and abode at a hostelry hard by the market-place, during which days there was a great stir in the city. For the great Philip, Count of Flanders, was then dwelling in this his town and had caused a quintain to be set up in the market-place, which covered a great square space in the midst of the city; which quintain was in the form of a strong shield, firmly hung to a post whereupon the aspirants to knighthood and the lusty youth might practise themselves in warlike sports at full

gallop, and make trial of their strength either by breaking their lances or by piercing through the shield. Gerald therefore, who beheld all this from the upper chamber of his hostelry (and would that I could add, strong enough in mind to despise it all as a vain show), saw the Count himself and a great host of nobles with him, both knights and barons clad in silk; he saw such a host of goodly chargers rushing past at the gallop, such a forest of lances broken, that, beholding all these things with great attention, he was scarce able to contain himself with wonder. Yet when this had endured but for the space of a single hour, and the whole square had been crowded all that while with that great press of noblemen, suddenly Count Philip departed and the rest slipped away behind him; so that, where all had lately been so full of vain show, now neither man nor beast could be seen, nor anything but the bare and desert market-place. Wherefore, concerning this and like pomps, Gerald is always wont to show how great a proof and demonstration they give us that all things under the sun are subject to vanity, even as phantoms which swiftly pass away; and how all things in this world endure but for a moment.

Proceeding therefore on his journey and crossing the sea of Flanders he came to Canterbury, and ate on the day of the Holy Trinity with the monks of that monastery in their refectory at the Prior's bidding. Sitting then in that hall with the Prior and the greater monks at the high table he noted there, as he was wont to relate, two things; that is to say, the excessive superfluity of signs, and the multitude of the dishes. For the Prior sent so many gifts of meat to the monks who served him, and they on their part to the lower tables, and the recipients gave so many thanks and were so profuse in their gesticulations of fingers and hands and arms and in the whisperings whereby they avoided open speech, (wherein all showed a most unedifying levity and licence,) that Gerald felt as if he were sitting at a stage play or among a company of actors and buffoons; for it would be more appropriate to their Order and to their honourable estate to speak modestly in plain human speech than to use such a dumb garrulity of frivolous signs and hissings. Of the dishes themselves and their multitude what can I say but this, that I have oft-times heard him relate how six courses or more were laid in order (or shall I not say in disorder?) upon the table; and these of the

most sumptuous kind. At the very last, in the guise of principal course, masses of herbs were brought to all the tables, but they were scarcely touched, in face of so many kinds of fishes, roast and boiled, stuffed and fried—so many dishes tricked out by the cook's art with eggs and pepper—so many savouries and sauces composed by that same art to stimulate gluttony, and to excite the appetite. Add to this, that there was such abundance of wine and strong drink—of piment and claree, of new wine and mead and mulberry wine, and all intoxicating liquors in so much abundance—that even beer, which the English brew excellently (especially in Kent), found no place; but rather beer stood as low in this matter as the pot-herbs among other dishes. I say, ye might see so excessive and sumptuous a superfluity here in meats and dishes as might weary not only the guest who partook thereof, but even the beholder. What then would Paul the Hermit have said to this? or Anthony? or Benedict, father and founder of monastic life? Nay, to seek examples far nearer to our own times, what would our noble Jerome have said, who, in his *Lives of the Fathers*, extols with such praise the parsimony and abstinence and moderation of the early Church, saying among other things that the Church, in proportion as she hath grown in wealth, hath much decreased in the virtues? Moreover, Gerald would sometimes say (as is not beside the mark to relate here) how the monks of St Swithun at Winchester, with their Prior at their head, grovelled in the dust before Henry II, King of England, and complained to him with tears and wailing that their bishop, Richard, who was in place of an abbot to them, had taken away three of their daily dishes. Whereupon the King asked how many dishes remained, and they answered, 'Ten, for it is an ancient custom with us to have thirteen.' 'How!' said the King, 'I and my court am content with three dishes. Perish therefore your bishop unless he reduce your dishes in the monastery to as few as my dishes at court!'

GIRALDUS CAMBRENSIS *de Rebus a se Gestis*, translated by G. G. COULTON: *Social Life in Britain*. (*Works*, 8 vols. Rolls Series.)

ROGER BACON

C. H. E. L. 1. 205–210. Roger Bacon (1214?–1294), ‘a native of Ilchester, was the most brilliant representative of the Franciscan order in Oxford.’ Bacon ‘fell under suspicion for his liberal opinions, and was sent to Paris and kept there in strict seclusion for ten years (1257–67). After his liberation through the goodwill of Clement IV, in the wonderfully brief space of some eighteen months, the grateful and enthusiastic student wrote three memorable works, *Opus Majus*, *Opus Minus* and *Opus Tertium* (1267). These were followed by his *Compendium Studii Philosophiae* (1271–2) and by a Greek grammar of uncertain date.’ The *Compendium* led to his being placed once more under restraint. He died at Oxford and was buried among the Friars Minor, probably in 1294. ‘Roger Bacon was the earliest of the natural philosophers of western Europe....He was at least a century in advance of his time; and in spite of the long and bitter persecution that he endured he was full of hope for the future. He has been described by Diderot as “one of the most surprising geniuses that nature had ever produced, and one of the most unfortunate.”’

(a) ON INCOMPETENT TRANSLATORS OF ARISTOTLE

Though we have numerous translations of all the sciences by Gerard of Cremona, Michael Scot, Alfred the Englishman, Herman the German, and William the Fleming¹, there is such an utter falsity in all their writings that none can sufficiently wonder at it. For a translation to be true, it is necessary that a translator should know the language from which he translates, and the science he wishes to translate. But who is he? and I will praise him, for he has done marvellous things. Certainly none of the above-named had any true knowledge of the tongues or of the sciences, as is clear, not from their translations only, but their condition of life. All were alive in my time; some in their youth, contemporaries with Gerard of Cremona, who was somewhat more advanced in years among them. Herman the German, who was very intimate with Gerard, is still alive [1272], and a bishop. When I questioned him about certain books of Logic², which he had to translate from the Arabic, he roundly told me he knew nothing of Logic, and therefore did not dare to translate them, and certainly if he was unacquainted with Logic, he could know nothing of other sciences as he ought.

¹ William of Moerbeke, translator of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* and *Politics* (*Sandys, History of Classical Scholarship*, I. 585 f.).

² Aristotle’s *Rhetic* and *Poetic* are meant (*Sandys, ib.* 591, n. 3).

Nor did he understand Arabic, as he confessed, because he was rather an assistant in the translations than the real translator. For he kept Saracens about him in Spain, who had a principal hand in his translations. In the same way Michael the Scot claimed the merit of numerous translations. But it is certain that Andrew the Jew laboured at them more than he did. And even Michael, as Herman reported, did not understand either the sciences or the tongues. And so of the rest; especially the notorious William the Fleming, who is now in such reputation. Whereas it is well known to all the literati at Paris, that he is ignorant of the sciences in the original Greek, to which he makes such pretensions; and therefore he translates falsely, and corrupts the philosophy of the Latins. For Boëtius¹ alone was well acquainted with the tongues and their interpretation. My lord Robert [Grosseteste], by reason of his long life and the wonderful methods he employed, knew the sciences better than any other man; for though he did not understand Greek or Hebrew, he had many assistants. But all the rest were ignorant of the tongues and the sciences, and above all this William the Fleming, who had no satisfactory knowledge of either, and yet has undertaken to reform all our translations and give us new ones. But I have seen the books, and I know them to be faulty, and that they ought to be avoided. For as at this time, the enemies of the Christians, the Jews, the Arabs, and Greeks, have the sciences in their own tongues, they will not allow the Christians the use of perfect MSS, but they destroy and corrupt them; particularly when they see incompetent people, who have no acquaintance with the tongues and the sciences, presuming to make translations.

¹ Boëthius, translator of Aristotle's *Organon* (Sandys, *ib.* 253).

Compendium Philosophiae, c. viii. p. 471, translated in Brewer's Preface to *Opera...Inedita*, Rolls Series, 15.

(b) ON MARVELLOUS ARTIFICIAL INSTRUMENTS

I will now proceed, therefore, to relate the works of art and miracles of nature, that I may afterwards expound the cause and the manner thereof; wherein there is nothing magical; nay rather, all magical power would seem inferior to such works, and unworthy of them. And first I will discourse through the

figure and reason of art alone. For vessels might be made to move without oars or rowers, so that ships of great size might move on sea or on river, at the governance of a single man, more swiftly than if they were strongly manned. Moreover, chariots might be made to move without animal impulse at an incalculable speed; such as we suppose those scythed chariots to have been wherewith men were wont to fight in ancient days. Again, flying instruments might be made, so that a man might sit in the midst thereof, turning a certain machine whereby wings of artful composition should beat the air, after the fashion of a bird in her flight. Another instrument might be made, of small size, to raise or to lower weights of almost infinite greatness; than which nothing could be more useful in certain cases. For, by means of an instrument of the height and breadth of three fingers, and less bulk than they, a man might free himself and his companions from all peril of prison, lifting them and lowering them again. Moreover, an instrument might easily be made whereby one man could violently draw a thousand men to himself against their will, and so also of the attraction of other things. Again, instruments might be made for walking in the sea, or in rivers, even to the very bottom, without bodily danger: for Alexander the Great used these to see the secrets of the sea, as is related by Ethicus the Astronomer¹. For these things were done of old, and have certainly also been done in our own times; except possibly the flying machine, which I have never seen, nor have I met any man who hath seen it; but I know a wise man who hath excogitated this artifice. And almost innumerable things of this kind might be made; bridges over rivers without pier or prop whatsoever, and unheard of machines and engines.

¹ An author on cosmography often quoted by Bacon.

Epistola de Secretis Operibus Artis et Naturae, c. iv.
p. 532 f., Brewer, translated in COULTON, *op. cit.*

WALTER MAP

C. H. E. L. I. 177–178, 188–191. Walter Map was born about 1137, on the marches of Wales, and studied in Paris from about 1154 to 1160. He became one of the king's itinerant judges and was appointed archdeacon of Oxford in 1197. He was no longer living by 1209. ‘Map was the author of an entertaining miscellany in Latin prose, *De Nugis Curialium*, a work in a far lighter vein than that of John of Salisbury....But, even in this lighter vein, Map has often a grave moral purpose.’ To Map are ascribed certain poems in rhymed Latin verse, notably the *Apocalypse*, the *Confession* and the *Metamorphosis* of bishop Golias, who is taken as a type of clerical vice. ‘In the accentual trochaics of the *Confession*, the bishop is dramatically represented as remembering “the tavern that he has never scorned, nor ever will scorn until the angels sing his requiem.”’ Then follow the four lines, which are better known and more misunderstood than any in the poem:

*Meum est propositum in taberna mori:
Vinum sit appossum morientis ori,
Ut dicant cum venerint angelorum chori,
“Deus sit propitius huic potatori!”*

These lines, with part of the subsequent context, were at an early date extracted from their setting and made into a drinking song.¹ There is very little reason for believing that Map wrote any of these verses, and in any case they were written as satire and without any jovial intention. For an English version of the *Confession of Golias* see *Wine, Women and Song* by John Addington Symonds. ‘Map is credited in certain MSS with the authorship of the “original” Latin of the great prose romance of *Lancelot du Lac*, including the *Quest of the Holy Grail* and the *Death of Arthur*; but no such “Latin original” has yet been found.’ See *Latin Poems of Walter Mapes* (Camden Society).

OF KING HERLA

One Court and one only do stories tell of that is like our own. One of the most ancient of the British kings, Herla, it is said, was on a time interviewed by another king who was a pigmy in respect of his low stature, not above that of a monkey. This little creature was mounted on a large goat, says the tale, and might be described in the same terms as Pan; his visage was fiery red, his head huge; he had a long red beard reaching to his chest, and was gaily attired in a spotted fawn's skin: his belly was hairy and his legs ended in goats' hoofs. Herla found himself *tête-à-tête* with this being, who said ‘I am the king over many kings and princes, an unnumbered and innumerable people, and am sent, a willing messenger, by them to you. I am unknown to you, it is true, but I glory in the renown which has exalted

you above other monarchs, inasmuch as you are a hero and also closely connected with me in place and descent, and so deserve that your wedding should be brilliantly adorned by my presence as a guest, so soon as the King of the Franks has bestowed his daughter upon you. This matter is being already arranged, though you know it not, and the ambassadors will be here this very day. Let this be a lasting agreement between us, that I shall first attend your wedding and you mine on the same day a year hence.' With these words he turned, and swifter than a tiger vanished from view. The King returned home struck with wonder, received the ambassadors and accepted their proposals. When he took his place in state on the wedding day, before the first course the pigmy made his appearance, with so vast a crowd of similar beings that the tables were filled and a larger number sat down to meat outside the hall than within it, in pavilions brought by the pigmy, which were set up in a moment of time. Out of these pavilions darted servants bearing vessels each made of a single precious stone, by some not imitable art, and filled the palace and the tents with plate of gold and jewels; nothing was served or handed in silver or wood. Wherever they were wanted, they were at hand: nothing that they brought was from the royal stock or elsewhere; they used their own provision throughout, and what they had brought with them more than satisfied the utmost wishes of them all. Nothing of Herla's preparations was touched: his own servants sat with their hands before them, neither called for nor offering aid. Round went the pygmies, gaining golden opinions from every one: their splendid clothing and jewels made them shine like burning lights among the company: never importunate, never out of the way, they vexed no one by act or word. Their king, while his servants were in the midst of their business, addressed King Herla in these terms: 'Noble King, I take God to witness that I am here present at your wedding in accordance with our agreement: yet if there be anything more than you see here that you can prescribe to me, I will gladly supply it to the last point; if there is nothing, see that you do not put off the repayment of the honour conferred on you when I shall require it.' And so, without awaiting a reply, he swiftly betook himself to his pavilion, and about cock-crow departed with his people.

After a year had passed, he suddenly appeared before Herla,

and called on him to fulfil his agreement. To this he consented, and after providing himself with supplies sufficient for an adequate repayment, he followed whither he was led. The party entered a cave in a high cliff, and after an interval of darkness, passed, in a light which seemed to proceed not from the sun or moon, but from a multitude of lamps, to the mansion of the pigmy. This was as comely in every part as the palace of the Sun described by Naso. Here the wedding was celebrated, the pigmy's offices duly recompensed, and when leave was given, Herla departed laden with gifts and presents of horses, dogs, hawks, and every appliance of the best for hunting or fowling. The pigmy escorted them as far as the place where darkness began, and then presented the King with a small blood-hound to carry, strictly enjoining him that on no account must any of his train dismount until that dog leapt from the arm of his bearer, and so took leave and returned home. Within a short space Herla arrived once more at the light of the sun and at his kingdom, where he accosted an old shepherd and asked for news of his queen, naming her. The shepherd gazed at him with astonishment and said: 'Sir, I can hardly understand your speech, for you are a Briton and I a Saxon; but the name of that queen I have never heard, save that they say that long ago there was a queen of that name over the very ancient Britons, who was the wife of King Herla; and he, the old story says, disappeared in company with a pigmy at this very cliff, and was never seen on earth again, and it is now two hundred years since the Saxons took possession of this kingdom, and drove out the old inhabitants.' The King, who thought he had made a stay of but three days, could scarce sit his horse for amazement. Some of his company, forgetting the pigmy's orders, dismounted before the dog had alighted, and in a moment fell into dust. Whereupon the King, comprehending the reason of their dissolution, warned the rest under pain of a like death not to touch the earth before the alighting of the dog. The dog has not yet alighted.

And the story says that this King Herla still holds on his mad course with his band in eternal wanderings, without stop or stay. Many assert that they have often seen the band: but recently, it is said, in the first year of the coronation of our King Henry, it ceased to visit our land in force as before. In that year it was seen by many Welshmen to plunge into the river Wye in Here-

fordshire. From that hour the phantom journeying has ceased, as if they had transmitted their wanderings to us, and betaken themselves to repose. Yet if you are not willing to note how lamentable this unrest may be, not only in our own Court but in almost all those of great princes, you will have to enjoin silence on me: I shall be quite satisfied, and it will assuredly be fairer. Will you listen for a brief space to an account of certain recent events?

from *De Nugis Curialium*. Translated for this work by
MONTAGUE RHODES JAMES, Litt.D., Provost of Eton.

RICHARD OF BURY

C. H. E. L. I. 213–216. Richard of Bury (1281–1345), son of a knight and born near Bury St Edmunds, studied theology and philosophy at Oxford, and became dean of Wells and bishop of Durham. He lives in literature as the author of *Philobiblion*, which was completed on his birthday, 24 January 1345. He had met Petrarch and was a humanist before his time. ‘Richard of Bury marks for England the time of transition between the scholastic era and the revival of learning.’ It should be added that the authorship of *Philobiblion* has been claimed for the Dominican, Robert Holcot.

THE CARE OF BOOKS

Cap. 1. That desirable treasure of wisdom and knowledge, which all men covet by natural instinct, doth infinitely transcend all earthly riches....Where dost thou most gladly hide, O chosen treasure? and where shall our thirsty souls find thee? Surely it is in books that thou hast pitched thy tent; for there hast thou been set by the most Highest, the Light of Lights, the Book of Life!...Lastly, we must weigh what comfortable teaching there is in books, how easy and how secret. How safely do we lay bare before a book, without false shame, the poverty of our human ignorance! Books are masters who teach us without rod or ferule, without reviling or wrath, without [gifts of] garments or money. If thou comest to visit them, they sleep not; if thou wilt question them, they hide nothing; they murmur not at thine errors, they have no laugh of scorn at thine ignorance.

Cap. 3. From the aforesaid we draw a corollary pleasing to ourselves but acceptable, we fear, to few: to wit, that no man should be withheld from buying books, at however great a price, if only his means will permit—unless, indeed, he must needs

resist the malice of the vendor, or await a more opportune season for buying. For, if it be wisdom alone which giveth a book its price, and if wisdom be a treasure which no man can number, so that (as these premisses suppose) the price of books is more than tongue can tell, how then can that be a dear bargain wherein an infinite good is bought? Wherefore Solomon, that sun among men, exhorteth us to buy books gladly and sell them unwillingly, saying in the 23rd chapter of Proverbs, 'Buy the truth, and sell not wisdom.'

Cap. 17. You will see perchance some headstrong youth, sitting slothfully at his studies...his finger-nails are filthy, black as jet, and with them he marks the place where the matter takes his fancy. He distributes innumerable straws, laying them conspicuously in divers places of the book, that the wheatstalk may recall whatsoever his memory may let slip. These straws, which are never withdrawn, remain undigested in the book's belly, first distending it to the bursting of its wonted clasps, and then rotting in the neglect and oblivion to which they have been left. He shrinketh not from eating fruit or cheese over his open book, nor from moving his cup carelessly over it; and, having no bag at hand, he leaves in his book the fragments that remain.... Then he leans his elbows on the book and takes a long sleep in exchange for his brief study, and bends back the margins of the leaves to smooth out the wrinkles, to the no small detriment of the volume. Now the rain is over and gone, and the flowers appear on our earth; and this scholar whom we describe, this neglector rather than inspector of books, will stuff his volume with violets, primroses, roses and four-leaved clover. Then he will paw it over with hands wet with water or sweat; then with dusty gloves he will fumble over the white parchment, and hunt for his page, line by line, with a forefinger clad in this ancient leather. Then, at the prick of some biting flea, the sacred volume is cast aside, scarce to be closed again for another month, when it is so clogged and swollen with dust that it resists all efforts to close it.

But we must specially keep from all touch of our books those shameless youths who, when they have learned to shape the letters of the alphabet, straightway become incongruous annotators of all the fairest volumes that come in their way, and either deck with their monstrous alphabets all broader margins that they can find around the text, or rashly presume to write with

unchastened pen whatsoever frivolous stuff may happen to run at that moment in their heads.... There are thieves also, who shamefully mutilate our books, cutting down the lateral margins, to the very quick of the written text, as material for their own epistolary correspondence, or stealing for various evil uses the blank pages which guard the book's ends; a sort of sacrilege which doth merit to be prohibited under strictest threat of excommunication.

Moreover, scholastic decency imperatively demands that, whensoever we return to study from our meals, we should wash our hands before reading; no finger dipped in grease should either turn the leaves or even open the clasps, before such ablution. Let no whimpering child be suffered to admire the pictured capital letters, lest his slimy hand defile the parchment; for whatsoever the child seeth, that must he also touch. The unlearned also, for whom a book is the same whether it be held open upright or topsy-turvy, are utterly unworthy of any communion with books. Let the clerk see to it also, that the sooty scullion reeking straight from the fleshpots lay no unwashen finger on the lily-white page; let him who ministereth to your precious volumes be one who walketh without blemish.

Philobiblion, translated by G. G.
COULTON: *Social Life in Britain*.

EARLY TRANSITION ENGLISH

CANUTE SONG

C. H. E. L. i. 217–219. With this song we can begin the regular quotation of passages in their original English. The illustrations will show the nature of the written hand. The manuscripts, besides elaborate contractions, use the characters þ and ð indifferently for *th*, and a character ȝ equivalent to an initial *y* or to the palatal *h* (*gh*)—the distinction is easily made. More rarely, and in later MSS, it stands for the final *z* sound. The letters *u* and *v* are constantly interchanged, the most noticeable points of usage being a preference for *v* as initial and for *u* between two vowels. A few lines will illustrate this:

Denk vpon þis ilke þrepe, þer þou forth þrynges;
Among prynces of prys, & þis a pure token
Of þe chaunce at þe grene chapel of cheualrous knyȝteȝ;
& þe schal in þis nwezer aȝayn to my woneȝ,
& we schyn reuel, etc.

The practice of editors has varied between the extremes of a general substitution of modern equivalents and a rigid reproduction of the manuscripts with all the contractions indicated by italics. There is something to be said in defence of each method. In the following pages no mechanical consistency has been attempted. The quoted editions have been generally followed, but the modern use of *u* and *v* has been preferred. Contractions have been filled out, and equivalents of obsolete characters substituted. The only surviving trace of the old characters in modern English is in the humorous archaism of ‘ye’ for ‘the’ where the initial is, of course, not *y* but þ, a specially interesting survival, as the A.S. and M.E. þ is just the runic ‘thorn.’ (See p. 13.)

The century from 1150 to 1250 saw many changes in the national language—modifications of accidence, syntax and vocabulary, modifications of script, modifications of verse form. While monks were compiling their chronicles and scholars their treatises in the learned language, the popular tongue lived on in songs and verses that have not survived. Twelfth century English still looks back to an earlier day; but in the *Canute Song* (c. 1167) ‘can be seen the popular verse striving in the direction of foreign style. The song is of rude workmanship, but the effect aimed at is not an alliterative one. Rime and assonance are present, and the line, as compared with earlier examples, will be seen to reveal definite attempts at hammering out a regular rhythm.’

Merie sungen muneches binnen Ely,
 Tha Cnut chyning reu ther by;
 Roweth, cnihtes, noer the land,
 And here we thes muneches sang.

Merrily sang the monks in Ely, as Canute the king rowed by; row, knights, near the land, and let us hear the song of these monks.

TEN BRINK: *History of English Literature.*

GODRIC'S HYMN TO THE VIRGIN

C. H. E. L. I. 220. Godric (died c. 1170) was 'pedlar, pirate and palmer' before he turned hermit. According to legend 'he had a unique influence over animals. His heifer, the hare that was nibbling at his garden herbs, the frozen birds, the stag pursued by huntsmen, all found a friend in him' (D.N.B.). His *Hymn to the Virgin*, alleged to have been taught him by the Virgin herself, occurs with other lines (set to music) on a leaf in MS Royal 5. F. vii (Brit. Mus.).

Sainte Marie Virgine,
 Moder Jesu Cristes Nazarene,
 Onfo, scild, help thin Godric,
 Onfang, bring hehlic with the in Godes ric.
 Sainte Marie, Cristes bur,
 Maidenes clenhad, moderes flur,
 Dilie mine sinne, rixe in min mod,
 Bring me to winne with the self God.

text of ZUPITZA, *Englische Studien*, Vol. xi, p. 423.

Onfo, <i>Receive</i> ric, <i>kingdom</i> rixe, <i>reign</i>	scild, <i>protect</i> bur, <i>bower</i> mod, <i>mind</i>	Onfang, <i>Receive</i> clenhad, <i>purity</i> winne, <i>bliss</i>	hehlic, <i>gloriously</i> Dilie, <i>Blot out</i>
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POEMA MORALE

C. H. E. L. I. 220-221. In form and matter one of the most interesting works of the time is *Poema Morale*—a parallel to the earlier *Be Domes Daege*. The evils of a misspent life, the terrors of judgment, the horrors of hell and the joys of the blessed are all depicted with medieval sincerity. The verse-form shows a new development. ‘Here, for the first time in English, is found the fourteener line, the catalectic tetrameter of Latin poets.’ The popularity of *Poema Morale* may be gathered from the many MSS that occur. The oldest is at Lambeth. The passage that follows is taken from this version. The whole poem contains nearly four hundred lines. Those that follow form the opening passage.

Ich em nu alder thene ich wes awintre and a lare.
 Ich welde mare thene ich dede mi wit ahte bon mare.
 Wel longe ich habbe child ibon a worde and a dede
 Thah ich bo a wintre ald to yung ich em on rede.
 Unnet lif ich habbe iled and yet me thingth ilede,
 Thenne ich me bi-thenche wel ful sare ich me adrede;
 mest al that ich habbe idon bi-fealt to child-hade;
 Wel late ich habbe me bi-thocht, bute God me nu rede;
 Fole idel word ich habbe iquethen soththen ich speke kuthe;
 fole yunge dede idon, the me of-thinchet nuthe.
 Mest al that me likede er nu, hit me misliketh.
 tha muchel fulieth his wil, hine solef he biswiketh;
 Ich mihte habbe bet idon, hefde ich the iselthe;
 Nu ich walde ah ich ne mei, for elde and for un-helthe.
 Elde me is bistolen on, er ich hit wiste;
 ne michte ich seon bi-fore me, for smike ne for miste.
 Erghe we beoth to done god, and to ufele al to thriste.
 Mare eie stondeth men of monne thanne hom do of criste.
 Thewel nedoth the hwile the homughen, wel oft hit schal rowen;
 thenne ye mawen sculen and repen that ho er sownen.
 Do he to gode that he mughe the hwile that he bo alive.
 ne lipnie na mon to muchel to childe ne to wive.
 the him solve foryet for wive ne for childe
 he scal cumen in uvel stude bute him God bo milde.

I am now older than I was in years and in lore,
 I wield more than I did, my wit ought to be more.
 Well long have I been a child, in words and in deeds,
 Though I be old in years, too young am I in wisdom.

An idle life have I led, and still appear to lead;
 When I bethink me well of it, full sore I am in dread.
 Most all that I have done befalls to childhood (childishness).
 Full late I have repented me, but may God have mercy upon me!
 Many idle words I have uttered since I could speak,
 Many childish deeds I have done, of which I now repent.
 Most all that erewhile pleased me, it now displeaseth me.
 He who followeth his will much, he deceiveth himself.
 I might have done better, had I the discretion;
 Now I would, I am unable, through age and infirmity.
 Old age is stolen upon me before I became aware of it,
 I might not see before me for smoke nor for mist.
 Slow are we to do good, and all too bold to do evil;
 More do men stand in awe of men than they do of Christ.
 Those who do not well while they may, full often shall they
 rue it,
 When they shall mow and reap what they previously had sown.
 Do for God what ye may, the while ye are alive.
 Let no man trust too much neither to child nor to wife (women);
 For he who forgetteth himself for wife or for child,
 He shall come into an evil place, except God be merciful to him.

text and translation of RICHARD MORRIS:
Old English Homilies (E. E. T. S. 34).

ORMULUM

C. H. E. L. I. 223-225. One of the longest works of the period is not one of the most interesting. *Ormulum*, the book of a monk named Orm, is a lengthy series of scripture paraphrases with even more lengthy homilies attached. It is careful, correct and uninspired. Only a fraction of the work was finished, and it is already 20,000 lines long. As literature *Ormulum* can be easily overrated; but as an example of the language, written with elaborate correctness, it is of great importance. (MS Bodl. Jun. I.)

Icc hafe sett her o þiss poc
 amang Godspellless wordess,
 All þurh me selfenn, manij word
 þe rime swa to fillenn;
 Acc þu shalt findenn þatt min
 word,
 e33whær þær itt iss ekedd,

I have placed here in this book
 among the words of the Gospel,
 Entirely through myself, many a
 word
 the rime so to complete;
 But thou shalt find that my word,
 in each place where it is added,

Maz3 hellpenn þa þatt redenn itt
to sen 3 tunnderrstanndenn
All þess te bettre, hu þe33m birrþ
þe Godspell unnderstanndenn;
3 forrþi trowwe icc þatt te birrþ

wel þolenn mine wordess,
E33whær þær þu shallt findenn
hemm
amang Godspellless wordess.
Forr whase mótt to læwedd folc

larspell off Godspell tellenn,
He mótt wel ekenn mani3 word
amang Godspellless wordess.

* * * * *
3 whase wilenn shall þiss poc
eftf oþerr siþe writenn,
Himm bidde icc þatt hét wríte riht,
swa summ þiss poc himm
tæcheþþ,
All þwerrt út afterr þatt itt iss
uppo þiss firrste bisne,
Wiþþ all swillc ríme alls her iss sett,
wiþþ all se fele wordess;
3 tatt he loke wel þatt he
an bocstaff wríte twi33ess,
E33whær þær itt uppo þiss poc
iss wríten o þatt wise.
Loke he well þatt hét wríte swa,
forr he ne maz3 nohht elless
Onn Ennglissch wríten rihht te word,
þatt wite he wel to soþe.

May help those that read it
to see and to understand
All the better how it becomes them
to understand the Gospel.
And therefore I trow that it becomes
thee

to bear well my words,
Wherever thou shalt find them

among the words of the Gospel;
For whoever undertakes to unlearned
people
to make a discourse out of the
Gospels,
He must rightly add many a word
among the words of the Gospel.

* * * * *
And whoever shall wish this book
to write again another time,
I pray him that he write it correctly,
as this book teaches him,

All throughout after what it is
in this first exemplar,
With all such rime as here is placed,
with as many words;
And that he look well that he
write one letter twice
Wherever it in this book
is written in that manner;
Let him look well that he write it so,
for he may not otherwise
In English write correctly the word,
let him well know that for truth.

T. WRIGHT: *Biographia Britannica Literaria*.

The *Ornulum* was first completely edited by Robert Meadows White, D.D. (Oxford, 1852), and his text (revised) is used above.

THE BESTIARY

C. H. E. L. i. 227-228. Besides direct homiletic instructions the Englishman of the thirteenth century had for his religious guidance elaborate allegories, such as the *Bestiary* (c. 1220), in which the habits of animals are made to symbolise spiritual truths. An earlier *Bestiary*, that of Philippe de Thaon, has already been quoted.

THE PANTHER

Natura Pantere.

Panter is an wilde der,
 Is non fairere on werlde her;
 He is blac so bon of qual,
 Mid wite spottes sapen al,
 Wit, and trendled als a wel,
 And it bicumeth him swithe wel.
 Worsø he wuneth, this panter,
 He fedeth him al mid other der;
 Of tho the he wile he nimeth the cul,
 And fet him wel til he is ful.
 In his hole sithen stille
 Thre dages he slepen wille;
 Than after the thridde dai
 He riseth and remeth lude so he mai.

Ut of his throte cumeth a smel
 Mid his rem forth over al,
 That overcumeth haliweie
 With swetnesse, Ic gu seie;
 And al that evre smelleth swete,
 Be it drie, be it wete.
 For the swetnesse off his onde,
 Worsø he walketh o londe,
 Worsø he walketh, er worsø he wuneth,
 Ilk der the him hereth to him cumeth,
 And folegeth him upon the wold,
 For the swetnesse the Ic gu have told.

so bon, as bone qual, whale sapen, fashioned trendled, round wel, wheel
 swithe, very nimeth, takes cul, best fet, feeds sithen, afterwards
 dages, days remeth, roars rem, roar haliweie, balsam gu, to you
 onde, breath wuneth, dwells Ilk der the, Each deer that folegeth, follows

The dragunes one ne stiren nout
 Wiles te panter rameth ogt,
 Oc daren stille in here pit,
 Als so he weren of dethe offrigt.

Significacio.

Crist is tokned thurg this der,
 Wos kinde we haven told gu her;
 For he is faier over alle men,
 So evensterre over erthe fen;
 Ful wel he taunede his luve to man
 Wan he thurg holi spel him wan;
 And longe he lai her in an hole—
 Wel him that he it wulde tholen:
 Thre daies slep he al onon,
 Thanne he ded was in blod and bon.
 Up he ros, and remede iwis—
 Of helle pine, of hevene blis—
 And steg to hevene uvemest;
 Ther wuneth with Fader and Holi Gast.

Amonges men a swete smel
 He let herof—his holi spel,
 Worthurg we mugen folgen him
 Into his godcundnesse fin.
 And that wirm, ure widerwine—
 Worso of Godes word is dine
 Ne dar he stiren, ne no man deren,
 The while he lage and luve beren.

WRIGHT and HALLIWELL, *Reliquiae Antiquae*, revised by A. S. COOK.

one, only ogt, aught Oc daren, But corver here, their Als so, As if
 dethe offrigt, death affrighted Wos kinde, Whose nature fen, mire
 taunede, shewed spel, word (gospel) tholen, endure onon, together
 remedie, cried pine, torment steg, ascended uvemest, on high
 wuneth, dwells Worthurg, Through which mugen, may godcundnesse fin,
 godhead's culmination wirm, serpent widerwine, adversary dine, sound
 deren, injure he, they lage, law

THE ANCREN RIWLE

C. H. E. L. I. 230-231. The *Ancren Riwle* (*The Nun's Rule*) belongs to the early part of the thirteenth century. It was written by an unknown author for the guidance of three anchoresses who, after a period of training within a nunnery, dedicated themselves to a religious life outside. It is 'a work which, owing to its greater originality, its personal charm and its complete sympathy with all that was good in contemporary literature, stands apart by itself as...one of the most interesting of the whole Middle English period.' Incidentally it throws much light upon communities of religious women and illustrates the increasing importance of these communities.

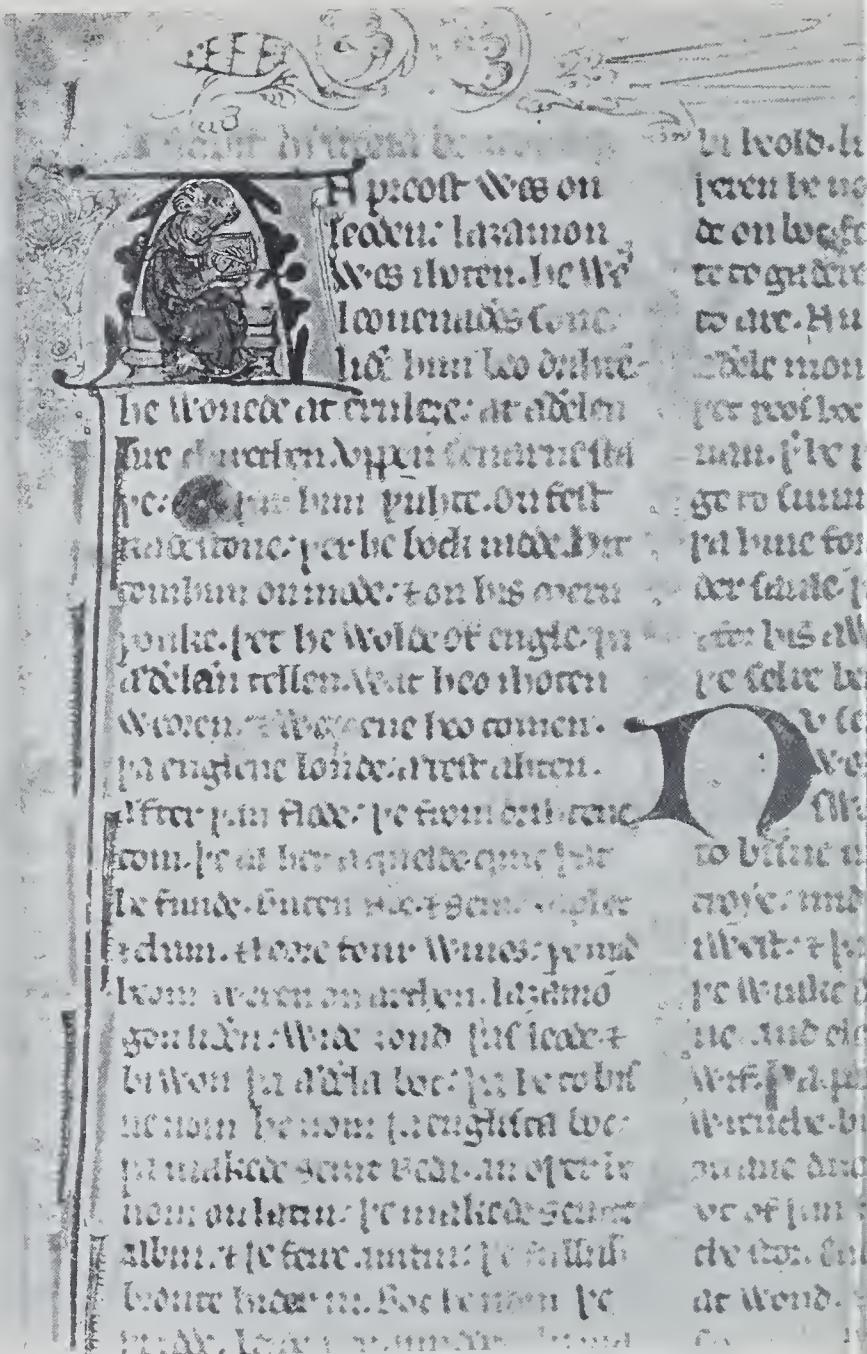
THE HEAVENLY BRIDEGROOM

A lefdi was thet was mid hire voan biset al abuten, and hire lond al destrued, and heo al poure, withinnen one eorthene castle. On mihti kinges lufe was thauh biturnd upon hire, so unimete swuthe thet he vor wouhleccunge sende hire his sonden, on efter other, and ofte somed monie, and sende hire beabelet bothe veole and feire, and sukurs of liveneth, and help of his heie hird to holden hire castel. Heo underveng al ase on unrecheleas thing, thet was so herd iheorted thet hire lufe ne mihte he never beon the neorre. Hwat wult tu more? He com himself a last, and scheawede hire his feire neb, ase the thet was of alle men veirest to biholden, and spec swuthe sweteliche and so murie wordes thet heo muhten the deade arearen vrom deathe to live, and vrouhte veole wundres, and dude veole meistries bivoren hire eihsihthe, and scheawede hire his mihten, tolde hire of his kinedome, and bead for to makien hire cwene of al thet he ouhte. Al this ne help nout. Nes this wunderlich hoker? Vor heo nes never wurthe vor te beon his schelchine. Auh so, thuruh his debonerté, lufe hefde overkumen hine thet he seide on ende: 'Dame, thu ert iweorred, and thine von beoth so stronge thet tu ne meiht nonesweis, withuten sukurs of me, etfleon hore honden, thet heo ne don the to scheomefule death. Ich chulle, vor the lufe of the, nimen this fift upon me, and ardden the of ham thet secheth thine death. Ich wot, thauh, forsothe, thet ich schal bitweonen ham undervongen deathes wunde, and ich hit wulle heorteliche vor to ofgon thine heorte. Nu, theonne, biseche ich the, vor the lufe thet ich kuthe the, thet tu luvie me, hure and hure efter then ilke deathe, hwon

thu noldes lives.' Thes king dude al thus: aredde hire of alle hire von, and was himsulf to wundre ituked, and isleien on ende. Thuruh miracle, thauh, he aros from deathe to live. Nere theos ilke lefdi of uvele kunnes kunde, yif heo over alle thing ne lufe him hereafter?

Thes king is Jesu Crist, Godes Sune, thet al o thisse wise wowude ure soule, thet the deoflen heveden biset. And he, ase nobleoware, efter monie messagers and feole god deden, com vor to preoven his lufe, and scheawede thuruh knihtschipe thet he was lufe-wurthe, ase weren sumewhule knihtes iwuned for to donne. He dude him ine turnement, and hefde, vor his leofmonnes lufe, his schelde ine vihte, ase kene kniht, on everiche half ithurled.

There was a lady who was besieged by her foes within an earthen castle, and her land all destroyed, and herself quite poor. The love of a powerful king was, however, fixed upon her with such boundless affection, that to solicit her love he sent his ambassadors, one after another, and often many together, and sent her jewels both many and fair, and supplies of victuals, and the aid of his noble army to keep her castle. She received them all as a careless creature, that was so hard-hearted that he could never get any nearer to her love. What wouldest thou more? He came himself at last and shewed her his fair face, as one who was of all men the most beautiful to behold; and spoke most sweetly, and such pleasant words, that they might have raised the dead from death to life. And he wrought many miracles, and did many wondrous works before her eyes, and shewed her his power, told her of his kingdom, and offered to make her queen of all that belonged to him. All this availed nothing. Was not this disdain a marvellous thing? For she was never worthy to be his scullion. But, through his goodness and gentleness, love so overmastered him that he at last said, 'Lady, thou art attacked, and thy enemies are so strong that, without help of me, thou canst not by any means escape their hands, so that they may not put thee to a shameful death. I will, for the love of thee, take upon me this fight, and deliver thee from those who seek thy death, yet I know assuredly that among them I shall receive a mortal wound, and I will gladly receive it to win thy heart. Now then, I beseech thee, for the love that I shew thee,



that thou love me, at least after being thus done to death, since thou wouldest not in my life-time.' This king did so in every point. He delivered her from all her enemies, and was himself grievously maltreated, and at last slain. But, by a miracle, he arose from death to life. Would not this lady be of a most perverse nature, if she did not love him, after this, above all things?

This king is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who in this manner wooed our soul, which the devils had besieged. And he, as a noble wooer, after many messengers, and many good deeds, came to prove his love, and shewed by his knightly prowess that he was worthy of love, as knights were sometimes wont to do. He engaged in a tournament, and had, for his lady's love, his shield everywhere pierced in battle, like a valorous knight.

text and translation of JAMES MORTON, Camden Society, 1858.

LAYAMON: *BRUT*

C. H. E. L. I. 234-238. Layamon's *Brut*, written in the thirteenth century, is the work of the first writer of any magnitude in Middle English. Layamon, a priest of Worcestershire, set out to narrate the story of Britain from the time of the Flood, but he really begins with the story of Troy and the arrival of the mythical Brutus, and ends with the death of Cadwalader, 689 A.D. His chief source is the *Brut* of the French clerk Wace, described in the Arthurian section, where the Arthurian matter of Layamon is also dealt with. It is Layamon who tells for the first time in English the story of Lear and Cymbeline and Loctrine. Standing at the entrance to the Middle English period, 'he may be said to look before and after. He retains much of Old English tradition; in addition, he is the first to make extensive use of French material. And, lastly, in the place of a fast vanishing native mythology, he endows his countrymen with a new legendary store in which lay concealed the seeds of later chivalry.' The lines (beginning at l. 1784) read downwards. (MS Cott. Cal. A ix.)

THE WRESTLING MATCH

Lithden tha leoden,
that heo on londe comen,
æt Dertemuthe i Totenes,
wel wes Brutus thes.
Tha scipen biten on that sond,
& al that folc eode an lond.
Tha hefde Brutus tha yeve

that Diana him bi-heihte,
i Logice than eit-londe,
ther heo weoren at-stonden.
Muchel wes tha murthe
the that folc makode,
& heo godd thonkeden
mid theu-fulle worden,

that heo heora wil-dayes
wældende weoren.
Heo funden i thon londe
twenti eotandes stronge.
Heora nomen ne herdi never
tellen,
a leotha ne a spella,
boten thes anes name
tha heore alre laverd wes.
Geomagog ihaten,
that was the heihste,
Godes wither-saka,
the wrse hine lavede.
Brutus & his gode folc
under-yeten theos feondes,
& heora stelane flon
fusden to thon feonden.
Tha flan heom weoren lathe,
& heo lithden to thon munten,
& i thon wilderne
an hudlese wunedēn.
Hit ilomp on ane daye,
that Brutus & his duhethe
makeden halinesse
mid wrscipen hehen,
mid mete & mid drinchen
& mid murie gleo-dreme,
mid seolver & mid golde,
the elche bar an honde,
mid horsen & mid scruden,
blisse wes on hirede.
wes al that folc swa blithe
swa heo neoren naver er on
live.
Tha comen thære twenti
teon of than munten
eotandes longe,
muchele & stronge.
Heo tuhen alle to gadere
treon swithe muchele.

heo leopen to Brutus folke,
ther heo hurtes duden.
In are lutle stunde
heo slowen fif hundred.
mid stocken & mid stanen
stal feht heo makeden,
& tha Troynisce men
mid strengthe wenden ayein.
heo letten gliden heora flan,
& tha eatendes fluhen,
& heo letten heom to
gæres lithen.
Tha heo best wende to fleonne,
tha weoren heo faie...
Tha nihentene heo slowen,
Geomagog heo nomen,
& he quic wes ibroht
bi-foren Brutone.
Brutus hine lette witēn
wel mid than beste,
for to leten fondien
of his main stronge,
to wreastlēne bi-foren Brutus,
Geomagog and Corineus.
Brutus hit demdæ
uppen ære dune.
uppen thære sæ cliva
that folc com to somne.
Forth com Corineus
& fusde hine sulfne,
& the eotend al swa,
that alle hit bi-heolden.
Ther wes moni wepmōn,
ther wes moni wifmon,
ther wes muchel folc,
at there wrastlinge.
Heo yeokeden heora earmes,
& yarweden heom seolvān,
breoste with breoste,
banes ther crakeden.

Heo scuten heora sconken,
 tha scalkas weoren stronge.
 heo hurten heora hafden,
 hælethes bi-heolden.
 Ofte heo luten a-dun
 also heo wolden liggen,
 ofte heo up lusan,
 also heo fleon wolden.
 lathliche læches
 heo leiteden mid ehan.
 al was heora gristbatinge,
 al swa wilde bares ehe.
 Whil heo weoren blake,
 & ladliche iburste,
 whil heo weoren ræde,
 & hehliche wenden.
 heora either wilnade
 other to wælden
 mid wihelen, mid wrenchen,
 mid wunderliche strengthen.
 Geomagog hine bi-thouhte...
 & thudde Corineum
 frommard his breoste,
 & breid eft on yein,
 brac him bi thon rugge
 feower of his ribben.
 Ufele he hine mærde,

ah na wiht he hit ne mende.
 Ful lutel ther wæs wonne
 that Corineus nas over-come.
 Neothelas he hine bi-thoute,
 wat he don mahte.
 nom him heorte to,
 & streahte his ærmes,
 & breid Geomagog
 that him thè rug for-berst,
 igrap hine bi thon gurdle,
 & hine grimliche heaf.
 Wes tha clude swithe heh,
 ther heo aclive fuhten.
 Corineus hine fælde,
 & hine fusde mid mæine,
 aduneward tha clude,
 that his ban to-cluven,
 that al the feond to-barst
 ær he to folde come.
 & thus the hæhe scathe,
 ferde to helle.
 Nu & æver mare,
 haveth that clif thare
 nome on ælche leode,
 that th^tweos Geomagoges lupe.
 & mid swilce ræde,
 thas eotentes weoren deade.

The people voyaged, until they to land came, at Dartmouth in Totnes;—glad was Brutus of this! The ships bit on the sand, and all the folk went on land. Then had Brutus the gift that Diana promised him, in Logice the island, where they had tarried. Great was the mirth that the folk made, and they thanked God with humble words, that they their wished-for days enjoyed. They found in the land twenty strong giants. Their names I heard never tell, in song nor in speech, except the name of the one who was their chief lord, hight Geomagog, who was lord of them all;—Gods adversary! the Worse loved him! Brutus and his good folk perceived these fiends, and discharged their steel arrows at the fiends. The arrows were grievous to them, and they withdrew to the hills, and in the wilderness in caverns dwelt. It befell on a day, that Brutus and his people made holy rites with high worship; with meat, and with drink, and with merry glee-sounds; with silver, and with gold, that each bare in hand; with horse, and with vestment;—joy was among the people! All the folk was so blithe as they never were

before in life! Then came there twenty tall giants descending from the hills, mighty and strong! They pulled up all together trees (clubs) most great; they leaped to Brutus folk, there harm they wrought. In a little while they slew five hundred; with stocks and with stones strong fight they made. And the Trojan men with strength turned again; they let fly their arrows, and made the giants flee, and they let their darts glide at them. When they deemed it best to flee, then were they destined-to-die. The nineteen they slew; Geomagog they captured, and alive he was brought before Brutus. Brutus caused him to be secured in the best manner, in order to make trial of his great strength; to wrestle before Brutus, Geomagog and Corineus. Brutus it judged upon a down, upon the sea-cliff the folk came together. Forth came Corineus, and advanced himself, and the giant also, that all beheld it. There was many a man, there was many a woman, there was mickle folk at the wrestling! They yoked their arms, and made themselves ready; breast against breast—bones there cracked! They thrust out their shanks, the heroes were strong! they dashed together their heads, the people beheld! Oft they stooped down as they would lie, oft they up leaped as they would fly; loathly glances they flashed with their eyes! Their gnashing-of-teeth was all as the wild boars rage! A while they were black, and loathly incensed, a while they were red, and highly enraged, either of them willed (endeavoured) the other to conquer, with wiles, with stratagems, with wondrous strength! Geomagog bethought him...and thrust Corineus from off his breast, and eft drew him back, broke him by the back four of his ribs; evilly he him marred, but no whit he it minded. There was full little wanting, that Corineus was not overcome. Nevertheless he bethought him what he might do; took to him heart, and stretched out his arms, and hugged Geomagog so that the back to him broke; grasped him by the girdle, and grimly heaved him up. The rock was most high, where on the cliff they fought. Corineus him felled, and hurled him with strength downward the rock, so that his bones cleaved asunder, that the fiend all broke in pieces ere he to the ground came; and thus the mighty wretch went to hell! Now and evermore hath the cliff there a name in each people, that that was Geomagoges Leap; and with such counsel these giants were dead. [The following passage begins at l. 2922.]

KING LEAR

Sixti winter hefde Leir
this lond al to welden.
The king hefde threo dohtren
bi his drihliche quen,
nefde he nenne sune,
ther fore he warth sari,
his manscipe to halden,
buten tha threo dohtren.
Tha ældreste dohter haithe
Gornoille,
tha other Ragau,

tha thridde Cordoille.
Heo wes tha yungeste suster,
a wliten alre vairest.
heo wes hire fader al swa leof
swa his ahene lif.
Tha ældede the king,
& wakede an athelan,
& he hine bi-thohte
wet he don mahte
of his kineriche,
æfter his deie

He seide to himsulven
that that uvel wes.
Ic wile mine riche to-don
& allen minen dohtren.
& yeven hem mine kine-
theode,
& twemen minen bearnen.
Ac ærst ic wille fondien
whulchere beo mi beste freond,
and heo scal habbe that beste
del
of mine drihlichen londe.
Thus the king thohte,
& ther æfter he worhte.
He clepede Gornoille,
hes gudfulle dohter,
ut of hire bure,
to hire fader deore,
& thus spac the alde king,
ther he on æthelen seat.
Sei me Gornoille
sothere worden.
swithe dure thu eart me,
hu leof æm ich the.
hu mochel worth leveste thu me,
to walden kineriche.
Gornoille was swithe wær,
swa beoth wifmen wel ihwær,
& seide ane lesinge
heore fædere thon king.
Leofe fæder dure,
swa bide ich godes are,
swa helpe me Apollin,
for min ilæfe is al on him,
that leveare thu ært me æne
thane this world al clane.
& yet ic the wile speken wit,
theou ært leovere thene mi lif,
& this ich sucge the to sothe,
thu miht me wel ileve.

Leir the king
ilefde his dohter læisinge,
& thas ænsware yef,
that waes the olde king.
Ich the Gornoille suge,
leove dohter dure,
god scal beon thi meda,
for thira gretinge.
Ic eam for mire ældde
swthe unbalded
& thou me loveste swthe
mare than is on live.
Ich wille mi drihliche lond
a threo al to-dalen.
thin is that beste deal,
thu ært mi dohter deore,
& scalt habben to laverd
min alre beste thein
theo ich mai vinden
in mine kinne-londe.
Æfter spac the olde kinge
wit his other dohter.
Leove dohter Regau,
waet seist tu me to ræide.
Seie thu bi-fore mire duhthen,
heo dure ich am the an herten.
Tha answærde Regau
mid rætfulle worden.
Al that is on live
nis me swa dure
swa me is thin an limene,
forthe min ahene lif.
Ah heo ne seide nathing soth,
no more thenne hire suster.
Alle hire lesinge
hire vader ilefede.
Tha answarede the king,
his dohter him icwemde.
Thea thridde del of mine
londe

ich bi-take the an honde.
 Thu scalt nime loverd
 ther the is alre leowost.
 Tha yet nolde the leod-king,
 his sothscipe bi-læven.
 he hehte cumen him bi-foren
 his dohter Cordoille.
 Heo was alre yungest,
 of sothe yær witelest,
 & the king heo lovede more
 thanne ba tueie the othre.
 Cordoille iherde tha lasinge
 the hire sustren seiden thon
 kinge,
 nom hire leaf-fulne huie
 that heo lihen nolden,
 hire fader heo wolde suge
 soth,
 were him lef were him lath.
 Theo queth the alde king,
 unræd him fulede,
 Iheren ich wle
 of the Cordoille,
 sua the helpe Appolin,
 hu deore the beo lif min.
 Tha answarde Cordoille,
 lude & no wiht stille,
 mid gomene & mid lehtre,
 to hire fader leve.
 Thu art me leof al so mi
 fæder,
 & ich the al so thi dohter.
 Ich habbe to the sothfaste love,
 for we buoth swithe isibbe,
 & swa ich ibide are,
 ich wille the suge mare,
 al swa muchel thu bist worth,
 swa thu weldende ært,
 & al swa muchel swa thu
 havest,

men the wlleth luvien,
 for sone he bith ilathe,
 the mon the lutel ah.
 Thus seide the mæiden
 Cordoille,
 & seoththen set swthe stille.
 Tha iwarthe the king wræth,
 for he nes noht iquemed,
 & wende on his thonke,
 that hit weren for untheawe
 th^t he hire weoreswa unwourth,
 that heo hine nolde iwurthi
 swa hire twa sustren,
 the ba somed læsinge speken.
 The king Leir iwerthe swa
 blac
 swlch hit a blac cloth weoren.
 iwærth his hude & his
 heowe,
 for he was swthe ihærmed.
 mid thære wræththe he wes
 isweved,
 that he feol iswoven.
 Late theo he up fusde,
 that mæiden wes afeared,
 tha hit alles up brac,
 hit wes uvel that he spac.
 Hærcne Cordoille,
 ich the telle wle mine wille.
 Of mine dohtren thu were me
 durest,
 nu thu eärt me alre læthest.
 Ne scalt thu næver halden
 dale of mine lande,
 ah minen twa dohtren
 ich wle delen mine riche.
 & thu scalt worthen wrecchen,
 & wonien in wansithe.
 For navere ich ne wende
 th^t thu me woldest thus scanden.

thar fore thu scalt beon dæd
ich wene.
fleo ut of min eāh-sene.
thine sustren sculen habben
mi kinelond,
& this me is iqueme.
The duc of Cornwaile

scal habbe Gornoille,
& the Scottene king
Regau the scone.
& ic hem yeve al tha winne
the ich aem waldende over.
& al the alde king dude,
swa he hafvede idemed.

Sixty winters had Leir this land all to govern. The king had three daughters by his noble queen; he had no son,—therefore he was sorry,—his honor to hold, except the three daughters. The eldest daughter hight Gornoille, the second Ragau, the third Cordoille. She was the youngest sister, of beauty fairest of all, she was to her father as dear as his own life! Then the king grew old, and weakened in strength, and he bethought him what he might do with his kingdom, after his day. He said to himself that that was evil: ‘I will divide my realm to all my daughters, and give them my kingdom, and share among my children; but first I will prove which is my best friend, and she shall have the best part of my lordly land.’ Thus the king thought, and thereafter he wrought. He called Gornoille, his goodly daughter, out of her chamber to her father dear; and thus spake the old king, where he sat in state: ‘Say me, Gornoille, true words; most dear thou art to me, how dear am I to thee? How much worth esteemest thou me to wield sovereignty?’ Gornoille was most wary,—as women are everywhere,—and said a leasing to her father the king: ‘Loved father dear, so expect I Gods mercy, so help me Apollin!—for my trust is all on him,—that dearer thou art to me alone than all this world clean; and yet (more) I will speak with thee, thou art dearer than my life; and this I say thee in sooth, thou mayest me well believe!’ Leir the king believed his daughters leasing, and this answer gave the old king that was: ‘I say to thee, Gornoille, loved daughter dear, good shall be thy meed for thy greeting. I am for my old age much enfeebled, and thou me lovest greatly, more than is in life! I will divide all my lordly land in three; thine is the best share; thou art my daughter dear, and shalt have for lord my all-best thane that I may find in my kingdom.’ Afterwards spake the old king with his daughter: ‘Loved daughter Regau, what sayest thou me to counsel? Say thou before my people how dear I am to thee in heart.’ Then answered with prudent words: ‘All that is in life is not so dear to me as is to me thy one limb, more than mine own life!’ But she said nothing sooth, no more than her sister;—all her leasing her father believed. Then answered the king—his daughter pleased him—‘The third part of my land I give to thee in hand; thou shalt take a lord (husband) where to thee is most agreeable.’ Yet would not the king his folly leave; he bade his daughter Cordoille come before him. She was youngest of all, of truth most studious, and the king loved her more than both the other two. Cordoille heard the leasings that her sisters said to the king. She took her credible oath, that she would not lie, but to her father she would say sooth, were it to him lief, were it to him loath! Then quoth the old king—mis-counsel followed him—‘Hear I will of thee, Cordoille, so help thee Apollin!

how dear is my life to thee?' Then answered Cordoille, loud and no whit still, with game and with laughter, to her loved father: 'Thou art dear to me as my father, and I to thee as thy daughter. I have to thee soothfast love, for we are most near in affinity, and as I expect mercy, I will say to thee more; thou art worth as much as thou art master of, and as much as thou hast, men will love thee; for soon is he loathed, the man who possesses little!' Thus said the maiden Cordoille, and afterwards sate most still. Then became the king wrath, for he was not then pleased, and weened in his thought that it were for contempt that he to her were so unworthy, that she would not estimate him as her two sisters, who both together spake leasings. The king Leir turned as black as if it were a black cloth, his skin and his hue turned, for he was exceedingly grieved; with the wrath he was stupefied, so that he fell in swoon. Then slowly he up-rose—the maiden was afraid—when it wholly brake forth, it was evil that he spake—'Hearken, Cordoille! I will tell thee my will; of my daughters thou wert to me dearest, now thou art to me of all most hateful! Never shalt thou hold part of my land, but to my daughters I will divide my realm, and thou shalt be wretched and live in misery! For never did I ween that thou wouldest thus shame me; therefore thou shalt be dead, I ween; fly out of my eye-sight! Thy sisters shall have my kingdom; and this is to me pleasing (my will). The duke of Cornwall shall have Gornoille, and the Scottish king Regau the-fair; and I give them all the possessions that I am ruler over!' And all the old king did as he had declared.

Layamon's Brut, ed. SIR FREDERIC
MADDEN. 3 vols. 1847 (revised).

THE OWL AND THE NIGHTINGALE

C. H. E. L. I. 238–242. *The Owl and the Nightingale* probably belongs to the first quarter of the thirteenth century. It contains 1794 ll. and occurs in two versions, MS Cott. Calig. A ix, and MS Jesus College, 29, Oxford. The former is the earlier and is followed in the passage quoted (l. 860 etc.). The author and sources are alike unknown, for Nicholas of Guildford and John of Guildford, both suggested, cannot be certainly credited with the poem; and though it embodies the spirit as well as the structure of Old French models, it is not a copy of any one. The poem is a debate, in which the nightingale appears to represent the world and the grave owl the cloister. 'The poem is one of many-sided interest. Its permanent value lies in its oft-sounded note of freedom, in its metrical innovations, its discarding of the artificial for the natural, its grasp of new methods, its new ideals, and in the daring suggestion it makes in connection with love.' It may be added that the poet, though obviously appreciative of foreign literature, is entirely English in feeling and vision. 'Do you think,' says the nightingale, in some of the lines quoted below, 'that wise men will forsake the right road for the foul fen, and that the sun will cease to shine, because it is foul in your nest?' It is an anticipation of another question to the strait-laced, 'Dost thou think because thou art virtuous there shall be no more cakes and ale?'

'Ich rede thi that men bo yare,
an more wepe thane singe,
that fundeth to than hoven-kinge:
vor nis no man witute sunne.
Vorthi he mot, ar he wende honne,
mid teres an mid wope bete,
that him bo sur that er was swete.
Tharto ich helpe, God hit wot!
Ne singe ich hom no foliot:
for al mi song is of longinge,
an imend sumdel mid woninge,
that mon bi me hine bithenche
that he groni for his unwrenche:
mid mine songe ich hine pulte,
that he groni for his gulte.
Yif thu gest herof to disputinge,
ich wepe bet thane thu singe:
yif riht goth forth, & abak wrong,
betere is mi wop thane thi song.
Theh sume men bo thurhut gode,
an thurhut clene on hore mode,
hom longeth honne notheles.
That both her, wo is hom thes:
vor theh hi bon hom solve iborwe,
hi ne soth her nowiht bote sorwe.
Vor other men hi wepeth sore,
an for hom biddeth Cristes ore.
Ich helpe monne on either halve,
mi muth haveth tweire kunne salve:
than gode ich fulste to longinge,
vor than him longeth, ich him singe:
an than sunfulle ich helpe alswo,
vor ich him teche thare is wo.
Yet ich the yene in other wise:
vor thane thou sittest on thine rise,
thu drahst men to fleses luste,
that wulleth thine songes luste.
Al thu forlost the murhthe of hovene
for tharto nevestu none stevene:
al that thu singst is of golnesse,

for nis on the non holinesse,
 ne weneth na man for thi pipinge
 that eni preost in chirche singe.
 Yet I the wulle an other segge,
 yif thu hit const ariht bilegge:
 wi nultu singe an other theode,
 thar hit is muchele more neode?
 Thu neaver ne singst in Irlonde,
 ne thu ne cumest noght in Scotlonde.
 Hwi nultu fare to Noreweie,
 an singin men of Galeweie?
 Thar beoth men that lutel kunne
 of songe that is bineothe the sunne.
 Wi nultu thare preoste singe,
 an teche of thire writelinge,
 an wisi hom mid thire stevene
 hu engeles singeth ine heovene?
 Thu farest so doth an ydel wel
 that springeth bi burne that is snel
 an let fordrue the dune,
 & floth on idel thar adune.
 Ac ich fare bothe north & suth:
 in eavereuch londe ich am cuuth:
 east & west, feor & neor,
 I do wel faire mi meoster,
 an warni men mid mine bere,
 that thi dweole-song heo ne forlere.
 Ich wissem mid mine songe,
 that hi ne sunegi nowiht longe:
 I bidde hom that heo iswike,
 that heom seolve ne biswike:
 for betere is that heo wepen here,
 than elles hwar beon deovlene fere.'

The nihtingale was igramed
 an ek heo was sum del ofschamed,
 for the hule hire atwiten hadde
 in hwucche stude he sat an gradde,
 bihinde the bure, among the wede,

an sat sum-del, & heo bithohte,

an wiste wel on hire thohte
 the wraththe binimeth monnes red.
 For hit seide the king Alfred,
 'Selde endeth wel the lothe,
 an selde plaideth wel the wrothe.'
 For wraththe meineth the horte blod
 that hit floweth so wilde flog,
 an al the heorte overgeth,
 that heo naveth no thing bute breth,
 an so forleost al hire liht,
 that heo ni sith soth ne riht.
 The nihtingale hi understod,
 an overgan lette hire mod:
 he mihte bet speken a-sele,
 than mid wraththe wordes deale.

'Hule,' heo seide 'lust nu hider:
 thu schalt falle, the wei is slider.
 Thu seist ich fleo bihinde bure:
 hit is riht, the bur is ure:
 thar laverd liggeth & lavedi,
 ich schal heom singe & sitte bi.
 Wenstu that wise men forlete
 for fule venne, the rihtte strete?
 ne sunne the later shine,
 theh hit bo ful ine neste thine?
 Sholde ich for one hole brede,
 forlete mine rihte stede,
 that ich ne singe bi the bedde,
 thar loverd haveth his love ibedde?
 Hit is mi riht, hit is mi lahe,
 that to the hexst ich me drahe.
 Ac yet thu yelpst of thine songe,
 that thu canst yolle wrothe & stronge,
 an seist thu wisest mankunne,
 that hi biwepen hore sunne.
 Solde euch mon wonie & grede
 riht suich hi weren unlede,
 solde hi yollen al so thu dest,
 hi mihte oferen here brost.
 Man schal bo stille & noht grede

he mot biwepe his misdede:
 ac thar is Cristes heringe
 thar me shal grede & lude singe.
 Nis nother to lud ne to long
 at rihte time chirche-song.
 Thu yolst & wonest, & ich singe:
 thi stevene is wop, & min skentinge.
 Ever mote thou yolle & wepen
 that thou thi lif mote forleten!
 an yollen mote thou so heye
 that ut berste bo thin eye!
 Wether is betere of twene twom,
 that mon bo blithe other grom?
 So bo hit ever in unker sithe,
 that thou bo sori & ich blithe.
 Yut thou aisheist wi ich ne fare
 into other londe & singe thare?
 No! wat sholde ich among hom do,
 thar never blisse ne com to?
 That lond nis god ne hit nis este,
 ac wildernisse hit is & weste:
 knarres & cludes hovene-tinge,
 snou & hahel hom is genge.
 That lond is grislich & unvele,
 the men both wilde & unisele,
 hi nabbeth nother grith ne sibbe:
 hi ne reccheth hu hi libbe.
 Hi eteth fish an flesh unsode,
 suich wulves hit hadde tobroke:
 hi drinketh milc & wei tharto,
 hi nute elles that hi do:
 hi nabbeth nother win ne bor,
 ac libbeth al so wilde dor:
 hi goth bitiht mid ruhe velle,
 riht suich hi comen ut of helle.
 Theh eni god man to hom come,
 so wile dude sum from Rome,
 for hom to lere gode thewes,
 an for to leten hore unthewes,
 he mihte bet sitte stille,

vor al his wile he sholde spille:
 he mihte bet teche ane bore
 to wehe bothe sheld & spere,
 than me that wilde folc ibringe
 that hi me wolde ihere singe.
 Wat soldich thar mid mine songe,
 ne sunge ich hom never so longe?
 Mi song were ispild ech del:
 for hom ne mai halter ne bridel
 bringe vrom hore wode wise,
 ne mon mid stele ne mid ise.
 Ac war lond is bothe este & god,
 an thar men habbeth milde mod,
 ich noti mid hom mine throte,
 vor ich mai do thar gode note:
 an bringe hom love tithinge,
 vor ich of chirche-songe singe.
 Hit was iseid in olde lahe,
 an yet ilast thilke soth-sahe,
 that man shal erien an sowe,
 thar he wenth after sum god mowe:
 for he is wod that soweth his sed
 thar never gras ne sprinth ne bled.'

‘My advice is therefore that those who yearn for the king of heaven should make themselves ready to weep rather than sing, since there is no man who is free from sin. Therefore, before a man goes hence, he must make due atonement with tears and with weeping, so that what before was sweet may henceforth be bitter. And, God knows, I help mankind in this matter. I sing to men no foolish themes. My song is of yearning and partly of lament, so that man in virtue thereof may take heed to himself and bewail his transgressions: with my singing I urge him to groan for his misdeeds. And if thou art inclined to dispute this point, then I claim to weep better than thou dost sing: if what is right takes precedence over what is wrong, then better is my weeping than thy song. Some men there are who are good throughout, wholly pure in heart; yet nevertheless they, too, long to depart this life. That they are here is but grief to them: for though they themselves are saved, around them do they see

naught but sorrow. They shed bitter tears for other men, and for them they entreat the mercy of Christ. Thus do I help men in either case: my mouth has healing power of a twofold kind. The good I encourage in their yearning: for when they are filled with longing, to them do I sing. And sinful men I assist as well, for I teach them where true misery lies. But I confute thee also on other grounds: for when thou art perched upon thy twig, thou enticest to carnal lusts all who hear thee. The joys of heaven thou dost wholly neglect: thou hast no voice to utter such things. All thy song is of wantonness: in thee there is no holiness: nor would any one think from thy piping, that priests are wont to sing in church. But I will speak to thee on another matter, to see if thou canst with reason explain it away. Why wilt thou not sing to other peoples by whom thy song is much more needed? In Ireland thou dost never sing: nor dost thou ever visit Scotland. Why wilt thou not go across to Norway and sing to the men of Galloway? For there live men with but little skill in songs of any sort. Why wilt thou not sing to the priests, and in teaching them something of thy trills, show them by thy notes how the angels in heaven are wont to sing? Thou dost behave like a useless spring that breaks forth near some rapid stream and lets the hill-side get quite parched while running fruitlessly to the plain. But I go north as well as south: I am well-known in every land. East and west, far and near, I do my duty passing well, warning men by my outcry that they be not enticed by thy mischievous song. I urge men by my singing not to continue long in sin: I bid them cease from deceiving themselves: for better it is that in this life they should weep than be hereafter companions of devils.'

The Nightingale by this time was angry, and a little ashamed as well, for the Owl had reproached her for the place wherein she sat uttering her cries—behind the dwelling, amongst the weeds..... She therefore remained deep in thought for a time: for well she knew in her heart, that anger doth rob a man of wisdom. And Alfred the king had also said it: 'Seldom ends well the man detested, seldom pleads well the angry man.' For wrath stirs up the blood of the mind, so that it flows like a wild flood, overpowering all the mind and leaving to it naught but passion. The mind thus loses all its light, and can discern neither truth nor right. The Nightingale was aware of this, and let her

angry mood go by. She could speak better in good humour than by bandying words in a temper.

‘Owl!’ said she, ‘now listen to me. Thou shalt trip: thy path is treacherous. Thou sayest that I flee behind the dwelling: that is true, the dwelling is ours. Where husband and wife lie together, there, near by, shall I sit and sing. Dost thou suppose that wise men leave the high road for the muddy fen? Or that the sun no longer shines though it be foul within thy nest? Ought I then for a hollow log to forsake my proper place, and sing no longer near the bed where the lord and his beloved lie? It is my duty, it is my law, to follow ever the highest things. But thou dost also boast of thy singing that thou canst scream in fierce and mighty fashion: thou dost claim to direct mankind that they should bewail their sins. Yet were all men to make lament, crying out as if in misery, should they scream as thou dost, they could but terrify their souls. A man must be calm, not given to wild utterance, even though he must bewail his transgressions. But when Christ is praised, then shall he cry aloud and sing with all his might. Hymn-singing in season can be neither too loud nor too long. Thou dost scream and lament, whereas I sing: thy note is tearful, mine gives delight. Ever may thou scream and weep to depart this life! and may thou scream so high as to burst both thine eyes! For which is the better of the two things in question, that a man be happy or else perturbed? So be it ever the lot of us two that thou be sad and I be merry. But thou dost ask further why I go not hence, and sing my song in another land. No! what should I do amongst such people, to whom all happiness is unknown? That country is poor, it is not gracious, but mere wilderness, a barren land. Crags and rocks reaching up to heaven, snow and hail are common there. It is a horrible, an uncanny land: the inhabitants thereof are wild and wicked: they keep neither truce nor peace: nor do they care how they live. Raw fish and meat make up their food, which is as if wolves had torn it to pieces. Milk they drink, and whey as well: they know not otherwise what to drink, having neither wine nor beer. They live, in truth, like wild beasts: and they go clad in shaggy hides just as if they hailed from hell. If some good man to them came—as once upon a time one came from Rome, in order to teach them better manners and to leave their evil ways—he might better remain at home,

for he would but waste his time. He could sooner teach a bear how to carry shield and spear, than he could bring a people so disorderly, to listen to the song I sing. What should I do there with my singing, however long to them I sang? My song would be completely wasted: for neither halter nor bridle, instrument of steel nor of iron, can check them in their mad behaviour. But in a land which is pleasant and good, and where the inhabitants have gentle ways, there I turn my throat to account, for there I can render useful service: and to them I bring glad tidings, for I sing of the hymns of the Church. It was stated in the law of old time—and the wise saying still remains—that a man must plough and also sow where he expects to reap a harvest: for he is mad who sows his seed where no grass or blossom doth ever appear.'

text and translation of Prof. J. W. H. ATKINS.

HYMN TO THE VIRGIN

C. H. E. L. I. 232. Closely connected with such 'woman-literature' as the *Ancren Riwle* 'are those works which belong to the Virgin cult and those which are touched with erotic mysticism. This section is the outcome of those chivalrous ideals which had dawned in the twelfth century, to soften the harshness of earlier heroics and to refine the relation between the sexes.' Among such works may be named *On God Ureisun of ure Lefdi*, *The Five Joys of the Virgin*, *A Prayer to Our Lady*, and English versions of *Compassio Mariae* and *Assumptio Mariae*. The prose *Lofsong of ure Lefdi* will perhaps best represent this Virgin cult. (MS Cott. Nero, A XIV.)

ON LOFSONG OF URE LEFDI

Swete leafdi, seinte marie, meiden over alle meidnes, thet bere
 thet blisfule bern thet arerdde al moncun up thet was adun
 a-fallen, thet thuruh adames sunne, and thet thuruh his holi
 passiunwerp thene deovel adun and heriede helle, ich, on sori
 sunfule thing, bidde thin ore, thet tu beo mi motild a-yeines
 mine soule fon, thet heo hire ne muwen bitellen, auh were me,
 and help me milzfule meiden in alle mine neoden. Mine wider-
 wines habbeth biset me on euche half abuten and secheth mine
 soule death; luthre men and deoflen heo habbeth monie wunden
 on me ifestned, thet acwel leth mine soule, bute thu beo mi
 leche. Ich habbe ofte ibuwen to alle mine threo i-fon, to the
 feond, and to the world, and to mine flesches sunne. Ich icnowe
 me gulti, and creie the leafdi merci, for ich habbe imaked yetes
 of alle mine fif wittes to sunfule untheawes. Mis i-loked, mis

ihercned, mis ifeled, mis ispeken, iloved swote smelles. Prude and wilnunge of pris me habbeth sore iwundet, ase wreththe and onde, lesunge, missware, uvele i-holden treouthe, cursunge, bac-bitunge, and fikelunge. Summe tide ich habbe iheved of other monnes mid woh, and mid unriht iyeven mis and inumen mis, and mis etholden ofte; tovel spac, and slow to godd, yemeleas and unlusti, sumehwile to pleiful, to drupi other hwiles. Ich habbe i-suneged ine mete and ine drunche bothe, and mid flesches fulthe ifuled me. Thus ich am lodliche i-hurt ine licame and ine soule with alle cunnes sunnen, for thauh that werc nere i the bodie, the wil was in the heorte. Al this ich i-cnoulechie the, swete leafdi, seinte marie, heiest alre halewen. Nim mot for me and were me, for ich am pine wurthe. Bisech for me thine seli sune milce and merci and ore, for nout ne mai he werne the, maiden, the hine bere, of alle thine bisocnen....His pine on rode and his death acwellen mine sunnen, and his ariste arere me in lif holinesse, and his up ariste do me stepen uwward in heie and holi theawes, from heih and to herre ever that ich iseo in syon the heie tur of heovene, thene loverd of leome, that the engles ever biholdeth, and ever so lengre so heo yirneth hit more, for ithet seli song is al that me secheth, leafdi, thurh thin erndinge cuthe me mine bone to thine eadi sune amen.

Sweet Lady Saint Mary, maiden above all maidens, that barest the blissful bairn (child) that raised up all mankind that had fallen down through Adam's sin, and through his holy passion cast down the devil and harrowed hell, I, a sorry, sinful thing, ask thy mercy, that thou be my pleader against the foes of my soul, that they may not accuse it; but protect me and help me, merciful maiden, in all my necessities. My enemies have encompassed me about on every side, and seek the death of my soul. Wicked men and devils have pierced me with many wounds that kill my soul, except thou be my leech. I have oft been obedient to all my three foes—to the devil, and to the world, and to the sins of my flesh. I acknowledge myself guilty, and cry thee mercy, Lady, for I have made gates of all my five senses for the entrance of sinful vices. I have looked amiss, hearkened amiss, felt amiss, spoken amiss, loved sweet smells. Pride and desire of praise have sore wounded me; also wrath and envy, leasing, perjury, unfaithfulness, cursing, backbiting, and flattery. Sometimes I have had wrongful possession of other

men's goods, and have given amiss, and received amiss, and often withheld amiss; quick to do evil, slow to do good; negligent and slothful; sometimes too playful, at other times too moody. I have sinned both in meat and in drink, and with the filth of the flesh defiled myself. Thus I am loathsomey hurt in body and in soul with sins of all kinds; for though the work was not in the body the will was in the heart. All this I acknowledge to thee, sweet Lady Saint Mary, highest of all saints. Intercede for me and protect me, for I am worthy of torment. Beseech thy blessed Son to show me kindness, mercy, and grace, for he may deny thee, maiden, who barest him, nothing of thy requests.... May his torment on the cross and his death destroy my sins; and may his arising (resurrection) raise me into holiness of life; and may his uprising (ascension) cause me to advance upwards in high and holy virtues, from high to higher (virtues) ever until I see in Zion, the high tower of heaven, the Lord of light, whom the angels ever behold and ever the longer (they behold him) the more they desire it. And because in that happy song is all we seek, Lady, through thy intercession make known my petition to thy blessed Son. Amen!

Old English Homilies, ed. RICHARD MORRIS (E.E.T.S. 34).

THOMAS DE HALES: LUVE RON

C. H. E. L. I. 233. The 'erotic mysticism' mentioned in the note above is very marked in *The Wohunge of Ure Lauerd*, and the same spirit appears in *On Ureisun of Oure Louerde*; but this 'erotic mysticism' is seen at its best in the *Luve Ron*, a poetical rendering of *The Wooing of Our Lord*, by Thomas de Hales. This delightful lyric, in eight-line stanzas, was written probably before 1240 by a native of Hales (Gloucester). The main theme of the work is the joy of mystic union with Christ. The poem contains twenty-six stanzas. The passage following begins at the ninth—with interrogations startlingly like those in Villon's famous Ballade, two centuries before Villon wrote. The poet, being asked by a 'maid of Christ' to write a love song, tells her how worldly lovers pass away like the wind, and that the Perfect Bridegroom is Our Lord.

Hwer is paris and heleyne,
 that weren so bryht and feyre on bleo,
 Amadas, tristram, and dideyne,
 yseude, and alle theo.
 on bleo, *in countenance* theo, *they*

Ector with his scharpe meyne,
and cesar riche of worldes feo,
Heo beoth iglyden ut of the reyne,
so the schef is of the cleo.

Hit is of heom al so hit nere,
of heom me haveth wunder itold.

Nere hit reuthe for to heren,
hw hi were with pyne aquold,
And hwat hi tholeden alyve here,
al is heore hot iturnd to cold.

Thus is thes world of false fere.
fol he is, the on hire is bold.

Theyh he were so riche mon,
as henry ure kyng,
And al so veyr as absalon,
that nevede on eorthe non evenyng,
Al were sone his prute agon,
hit nere on ende wrth on heryng.
Mayde if thu wilnest after leofmon,
ich teche the enne treowe king.

A swete if thu iknowe
the gode thewes of thisse childe.

He is feyr and bryht on heowe,
of glede chere, of mode mylde,
Of lufsum lost, of truste treowe,
freo of heorte, of wisdom wilde,
Ne thurhte the never rewe,
myhtestu do the in his ylde.

He is ricchest mon of londe,
so wide so mon speketh with muth,

meyne, might worldes feo, world's wealth Heo beoth iglyden ut
of the reyne, so the schef is of the cleo, *They are gone out of the realm as
the sheaf from the hillside* heom, them al so hit nere, *as if it had not been*
Nere hit reuthe, *Nor were it sorrow* hw hi, how they pyne, suffering
aquold, killed hi tholeden, they endured fere, reliance fol, fool
Theyh, Though veyr, fair nevede, had not non evenyng, no equal
prute, pride wrth on heryng, worth a herring leofmon, lover enne, one
gode thewes, good virtues mode, mind lost, pleasure Ne thurhte the
never rewe, myhtestu do the in his ylde, *Never needest thou rue if thou
puttest thyself in his power* muth, mouth

Alle heo beoth to his honde,
est and west, north and suth.
Henri king of engelonde,
of hym he halt, and to hym buhth,
Mayde to the he send his sonde,
and wilneth for to beo the cuth.

Ne byt he with the lond ne leode,
vouh, ne gray, ne rencyan,
Naveth he ther-to none neode,
he is riche and weli man.
If thu him woldest lufe beode,
and by-cumen his leovemon,
He brouthe the to suche wede,
that naveth king ne kayser non.

Hwat spekestu of eny bolde,
that wrouhte the wise salomon,
Of iaspe, of saphir, of merede golde,
and of mony on other ston.
Hit is feyrure of feole volde,
more than ich eu telle con,
This, bold mayde, the is bihote,
if that thu bist his leovemon.

Hit stont uppon a treowe mote,
thar hit never truke ne schal,
Ne may no mynur hire underwrote,
ne never false thene grundwal.
Thar-inne is vich balewes bote,
blisse, and joye, and gleo, and gal,
This, bold mayde, is the bihote,
and vych o blisse thar-wyth-al.

he halt, *he holds (as vassal)* buhth, *beweth* sonde, *message* cuth, *known*
byt, *asks* leode, *folk* vouh, ne gray, ne rencyan, *varied, fur, roan-*
coloured robe leovemon, *beloved* wede, *garments* bolde, *mansions*
merede golde, *pure gold* feyrure of feole volde, *many times fairer*
bihote, *promised* treowe mote, *sure hill* truke, *give away* underwrote,
undermine thene grundwal, *the foundation* vich balewes bote, *remedy of*
every evil gleo, mirth gal, song vych o blisse thar-wyth-al, *every*
bliss as well

Ther ne may no freond fleon other,
 ne non fur-leosen his iryhte,
 Ther nys hate ne wreththe nouther,
 of prude, ne of onde, of none wihte.
 Alle heo schule wyth engles pleye,
 some, and sauhte, in heovene lyhte,
 Ne beoth heo, mayde, in gode weye.
 that wel luveth ure dryhte.

Ne may no mon hine iseo,
 al so he is in his mihte,
 That may with-uten blisse beo,
 hwanne he isihth ure drihite.
 His sihte is al ioye and gleo,
 he is day wyth-ute nyhte,
 Nere he, mayde, ful seoly,
 that myhte wunye myd such a knyhte.

Old English Miscellany, ed. RICHARD
 MORRIS (E.E.T.S. 49).

freond fleon other, friend forsake another fur-leosen, lose iryhte, rights
 wreththe nouther, wrath neither prude, pride onde, malice engles, angels
 some, concord sauhte, peace Ne beoth heo, Are they not luveth ure
 dryhte, loveth our lord hine iseo, see him with-uten, without isihth, seeth
 Nere he, mayde, ful seoly, were he not, maid, full blessed wunye, dwell

UBI SUNT QUI ANTE NOS FUERUNT?

The note of moral interrogation is heard also in a striking poem of 1275 found in MS Bodl. Digby 86, under the heading *Ubi sount qui ante nos fuerount?* See also Böddeker, *Altenglische Dichtungen*, and Wright, *Specimens of Lyric Poetry*. Compare: 'Where wonen now the bones of trewe Fabricius? What is now Brutus or sterne Caton? The thynne fame yit lastyng of here idel names is marked with a few lettres.' (Chaucer's *Boethius*, Lib. II. metr. 7.)

Were beth they biforen us weren,
 Houndes ladden and hauekes beren,
 And hadden feld and wode?
 The riche levedies in hoere bour,
 That wereden gold in hoere tressour,
 With hoere brightte rode,

hauekes beren, carried hawks hoere, their tressour, tresses rode, cheeks

Eten and drounen, and maden hem glad;
 Hoere lif was al with gamen ilad;
 Men kneleden hem biforen;
 They beren hem wel swithe heye,
 And in a twincling of an eye
 Hoere soules weren forloren.

Were is that lawing and that song,
 That trayling and that proude gong,
 Tho hauekes and tho houndes?
 Al that joye is went away,
 That wele is comen to weylaway,
 To manie harde stoundes.

Hoere paradis they nomen here,
 And nou they lien in helle ifere;
 The fuir hit brennes hevere:
 Long is ay, and long is ho,
 Long is wy, and long is wo;
 Thennes ne cometh they nevere.

[Four stanzas omitted. A better fate befalls those who live in righteousness, and at last 'biget the murie londe' of heaven.]

There-inne is day with-houten night
 With-outen ende, strenkthe and might,
 And wreche of everich fo;
 Mid god him-selwen eche lif,
 And pes and rest withoute strif,
 Wele with-outen wo.

Mayden moder, hevene quene,
 Thou might and const, and owest to bene
 Oure shield ayein the fende:
 Helpe our sunne for to flen,
 That we moten thi sone iseen,
 In joye with-outen hende. Amen.

Minor Poems of the Vernon MS, Pt II.,
 ed. F. J. FURNIVALL (E.E.T.S. 117).

ilad, led	wel swithe heye, most exceeding high	lawing, laughing
gong, gait	stoundes, experiences	nomen, took
ho, always	wreche of, vengeance on	ifere, together
flen, sin to flee	fende, fiend	ay, ever
		sunne for to

OLD ENGLISH HOMILY

C. H. E. L. I. 218. The passage that follows is a short extract from a twelfth century homily (on Jeremiah xxxviii) containing the fable of the young crab and its mother.

Ihereth nuthe whulche thinges wunieth in thisse putte. Ther wunieth fower cunnes wurmes inne, that fordoth nuthe al theos midelerd. Ther wunieth in-ne fahe neddren, and beoreth atter under heore tunge, blake tadden that habbeth atter uppon heore heorte, yeluwe froggen, and crabben. Crabbe is an manere of fissce in there sea. This fis is of swulc cunde, that ever se he mare strengthdeth him to swimminde mid the watere, se he mare swimmeth abac. And the alde crabbe seide to the yunge, Hwi ne swimmest thu forthwarth in there sea also other fisses doth? And heo seide, Leofe moder, swim thu foren me and tech me hu ic scal swimmen forthward. And heo bi-gon to swimmen forthward mid the streme, and swam hire ther ayen. Thas fahe neddre bitacneth this fahe folc the wuneth in thisse weorlde, the speket also feire bi-foren heore evencristene also heo heom walde in to heore bosme puten, and swa sone se hi beoth iturnd awey from heom, heom to-twiccheth and to-draheth mid ufele weordes.

Hear now what things dwell in this pit; therein live four kinds of reptiles that are now destroying all this middle-earth. Therein live the spotted adders that bear poison under their tongues; black toads that have venom in their hearts; yellow frogs, and crabs. The crab is a kind of fish in the sea. This fish is of such kind that the more he endeavours to swim with the water the more he swimmeth backwards. And the old crab said to the young one, ‘Wherefore swimmest not thou forward in the sea as other fishes do?’ and it answered, ‘Dear mother, swim thou before me and teach me how I shall swim forwards.’ And she began to swim forwards with the stream, and always swam backwards (against it). These spotted adders betoken the deceitful folk that dwell in this world, that speak as fair before their fellow Christians as if they would embrace them, and as soon as they have turned away from them they slander (to-twitch) and detract them with evil words.

Old English Homilies, ed. RICHARD MORRIS, Pt I. (E.E.T.S. 29).

PROVERBS OF ALFRED

C. H. E. L. I. 218-219. The so-called *Proverbs of Alfred* occur in MSS of the thirteenth century; but these are recensions of an earlier form dating from the twelfth. The verses are strongly reminiscent of older native tradition, and are attributed to Alfred just as the Hebrew *Proverbs* are attributed to Solomon—on the principle that wise sayings must be attributed to a traditionally wise man. The passage given is that which concludes the MS at Jesus College, Oxford (ll. 427-457).

Thus queth Alured,
Wis child is fader blisse.
If hit so bi-tydeth
that thu bern ibidest
the hwile hit is lutel,
ler him mon-thewes.
thanne hit is wexynde
hit schal wende thar-to,
the betere hit schal iwrurthe
ever buven eorthe.
Ac if thu him lest welde,
werende on worlde,
lude and stille,
his owene wille,
hwanne cumeth ealde,
ne myht thu hyne awelde,
thanne deth hit sone,
that the bith unyqueme,
ofer-howeth thin ibod,
and maketh the ofte sory-mod.
Betere the were
iboren that he nere,
for betere is child unbore
thane unbuhsom.
The mon the spareth yeorde,
and yonge childe
and let hit arixlye,

bern ibidest, *child* *dost control* ler, *teach* mon-thewes, *manly virtues*
 iwrurthe, *become* buven, *above* him *lest welde*, *lettest him wield*
 werende, *growing* ealde, *age* hyne awelde, *control him* unyqueme,
 displeasing ofer-howeth, *despises* ibod, *command* sory-mod, *sorrowful in mind*
 ifiboren, *born* unbuhsom, *unbxom* (*disobedient*) yeorde, *rod*
 arixlye, *govern*

that he hit areche ne may,
that him schal on ealde
sore reowe. Amen.

Explicitum dicta Regis Aluredi.

Old English Miscellany, ed. RICHARD MORRIS (E.E.T.S. 49).

areche, reach

PATERNOSTER

C. H. E. L. I. 220. *Paternoster* is a twelfth century poem of some 300 lines, embodying a paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer. It is chiefly interesting as exhibiting the first consistent use of the short riming couplet. It probably owes something to a French or Latin model.

Pater noster qui es in celis & cetera.
 Ure feder thet in heovene is
 thet is al soth ful iwis.
 Weo moten to theos weordes iseon,
 thet to live and to saule gode beon,
 thet weo beon swa his sunes iborene,
 thet he beo feder and we him icorene,
 thet we don alle his ibeden,
 and his wille for to reden.
 Loke weo us with him misdon
 thurh beelzebubes swikedom;
 he haveth to us muchel nith
 alle tha deies of ure sith;
 abuten us he is for to blenchon,
 mid alle his mihte he wule us swenchen.
 Gif we leornith godes lare,
 thenne of-thuncheth hit him sare,
 bute we bileven ure ufele iwune.
 Ne kepeth he noht thet we beon sune,
 gif we clepieth hine feder thenne.
 Al thet is us to lutel wunne.

Old English Homilies, ed. RICHARD MORRIS (E.E.T.S. 29).

soth, *truthful* moten, *must* iseon, *look* live, *life* saule, *soul* swa, *like* iborene, *born* icorene, *chosen* misdon, *offend* swikedom, *wiles* nith, *envy* sith, *life* blenchon, *frighten* swenchen, *afflict* lare, *lore* of-thuncheth, *grieve* bute, *unless* bileven, *remain in* ufele iwune, *evil habits* kepeth, *heedeth* sune, *sons (of God)* clepieth, *call* wunne, *joy*

THE ARTHURIAN LEGEND

THE ORIGINS

C. H. E. L. i. 70–71, 243–256. The mystery of Arthur's end is as nothing to the mystery of his beginning. Next to the Devil, King Arthur is the person most usually associated with Seats, Crags, Castles, and other topographical features of Great Britain; but while the ancient name is everywhere, the ancient records and traditions are nowhere. Old English literature, even the *Chronicle*, knows nothing of Arthur. To find any mention of him earlier than the twelfth century we must turn to Wales, where, in a few obscure poems, a difficult prose story, and two dry Latin chronicles, we find the first written references, meagre and casual, but indicating traces of ancient tradition. The earliest is in *Historia Britonum*, ascribed to Nennius (Lat. *Nennius*), a Welshman who copied and freely edited a collection of brief notes on early British history and geography gathered from various sources. The original compilation has been dated as early as 679 and the recension made by Nennius as late as 826. The chronicle is very short (although it begins with Adam) and it deals mainly with the Romans and Saxons. The whole reference to Arthur is the passage that follows, describing the battle of Mount Badon in 516. Gildas, who was a youth in that year, also gives an account of the battle; but the only hero he mentions is 'Ambrosius Aurelian'us, a modest man, who of all the Roman nation was then alone in the confusion of this troubled period by chance left alive.'

I. NENNUS

At that time, the Saxons greatly increased in Britain, both in strength and numbers. And Octa, after the death of his father Hengist, came from the sinistral part of the island to the kingdom of Kent, and from him have proceeded all the kings of that province, to the present period.

Then it was, that the magnanimous Arthur, with all the kings and military force of Britain, fought against the Saxons. And though there were many more noble than himself, yet he was twelve times chosen their commander, and was as often conqueror. The first battle in which he was engaged, was at the mouth of the river Gleni. The second, third, fourth, and fifth, were on another river, by the Britons called Duglas, in the region Linuis. The sixth, on the river Bassas. The seventh in

the wood Celidon, which the Britons call Cat Coit Celidon. The eighth was near Guinnion castle, where Arthur bore the image of the Holy Virgin, mother of God, upon his shoulders, and through the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the holy Mary, put the Saxons to flight, and pursued them the whole day with great slaughter. The ninth was at the City of Legion, which is called Cair Lion. The tenth was on the banks of the river Trat Treuroit. The eleventh was on the mountain Bre-guoin, which we call Cat Bregion. The twelfth was a most severe contest, when Arthur penetrated to the hill of Badon. In this engagement, nine hundred and forty fell by his hand alone, no one but the Lord affording him assistance. In all these engagements the Britons were successful. For no strength can avail against the will of the Almighty.

translated by W. GUNN, revised by J. A.
GILES in *Six Old English Chronicles*.

Appended to *Historia Britonum* is a catalogue of the marvels of Britain, the eleventh of which is a grave of changing measure near the source of the river Anir, so called from Anir, 'son of Arthur the warrior.' A much fuller reference, however, is found in the tenth marvel, where we find names that occur in *Kilhwch and Olwen* in the *Mabinogion*.

There is another wonder in the region called Buelt. There is a heap of stones, and one stone laid on the heap having upon it the footmark of a dog. When he hunted the swine Troynt, Cabal, which was a dog of the warrior Arthur, impressed the stone with the print of his foot, and Arthur afterwards collected a heap of stones beneath the stone in which was the print of his dog's foot, and it is called, Carn Cabal. And people come and take away the stone in their hands for the space of a day and a night, and on the next day it is found on its heap.

translated by LADY CHARLOTTE
GUEST in the notes to the *Mabinogion*.

Two brief but significant references are to be found in *Annales Cambriae*, the oldest manuscript of which belongs to 954 or 955. At the date 516 comes this note: 'Battle of Badon in which Arthur carried the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ for three days and three nights on his shoulders, and the Britons were the victors'; and at the date 537 comes the briefer and more tragic entry: 'Battle of Camlan in which Arthur and Medraut fell.' Camlan is 'the dim weird battle of the west,' and Medraut is Mordred, 'the traitor of his house.' Badon and Camlan have been dated as early as 470 and 492.

II. THE WELSH BARDS

The poems of the ancient Welsh bards have been discussed almost as fiercely as the poems of Ossian. 'It may, however, be premised with some confidence that there lived in Wales, in the sixth and seventh centuries, several bards of note, of whom the best known by name are Llywarch Hêñ, Taliesin and Aneirin. The compositions attributed to these and other bards of this early period, are found in MSS the dates of which range from the twelfth to the end of the fourteenth century.... Amid much that is undeniably late and spurious, these collections of Welsh poetry contain a good deal that is, in substance, of obviously archaic origin.... The most celebrated of these early Welsh bards know nothing of Arthur. Llywarch Hêñ and Taliesin never mention him; to them Urien, lord of Rheged, is by far the most imposing figure among all the native warriors.' There are, indeed, only five ancient poems that mention Arthur at all. The reference most significant to modern readers occurs in the *Stanzas of the Graves* contained in *The Black Book of Caermarthen*: 'A grave there is for March [Mark], a grave for Gwythur, a grave for Gwgawn of the Ruddy Sword; a mystery is the grave of Arthur' (st. 44). Another stanza mentions the fatal battle of Camlan, and Bedwyr [Bedivere] who shares with Kai [Kay] pre-eminence among Arthur's followers in the primitive Welsh fragments of Arthurian fable: 'The grave of the son of Osrvan is at Camlan, after many a slaughter; the grave of Bedwyr is on the hill Tryvan' (st. 12).

Another Arthurian knight, Geraint, is the hero of a poem that appears both in *The Black Book of Caermarthen* and in *The Red Book of Hergest*. One of the eighteen stanzas mentions Arthur by name: 'At Llongborth saw I of Arthur's brave men hewing with steel, men of the emperor and director of toil.' *The Chair of the Sovereign* in *The Book of Taliesin* mentions Arthur obscurely as 'a warrior sprung from two sources,' to whom is entrusted the defence of the wall, 'Arthur the blessed one,' restless in activity.

Arthur, Kai and Bedwyr appear in another poem contained in *The Black Book*, apparently a dialogue between Arthur and the traditional gateward Glewlwyd Gavaelvawr, or 'Glewlwyd of the Mighty Grasp':

What man is the porter?
Glewlwyd Gavaelvawr.
Who is the man that asks it?
Arthur and the fair Kai.
How goes it with thee?
Truly in the best way in the world.

Although Arthur is mentioned once more—'Arthur distributed gifts, the blood trickled down'—the deeds celebrated in the almost incomprehensible lines of this poem are the deeds of Kai and Bedwyr. 'By the hundred there they fell, there they fell by the hundred, before the mighty Bedwyr.... Vanity were the foremost men compared with Kai in the battle. The sword in the battle was unerring in his hand.'

Arthur recedes still further into the twilight of myth in the only other old Welsh poem where any extended allusion is made to him. It is a most obscure poem of sixty lines contained in *The Book of Taliesin*. This is just

one of those weird mythological poems which are very difficult to interpret, and where, to quote Matthew Arnold, 'the writer is pillaging an antiquity of which he does not fully possess the secret.' Here Arthur sets out upon various expeditions over perilous seas in his ship Pridwen; one of them had as its object the rape of a mysterious cauldron belonging to the king of Hades. Six times recur the tragic lines, 'Thrice enough to fill Pridwen were we who went into it; but seven alone were they who returned from Caer Sidi.' The ending varies at each repetition—Caer Vedwyd, Caer Rigor, etc.—and whether these are different places or different names for one place cannot be said. The whole poem 'evidently deals with expeditions conducted by Arthur by sea to the realms of twilight and darkness.' Ancient British poetry has nothing further to tell us of this mysterious being. That Arthur was already a figure of legend is the only clear fact in the general obscurity.

III. THE MABINOGION

The most remarkable fragment of all the existing early Welsh literature about Arthur is the prose romance of *Kilhwch and Olwen*, assigned by most authorities to the tenth century. It is one of the stories that Lady Charlotte Guest translated from *The Red Book of Hergest* and published as *The Mabinogion* (1838). Of the twelve 'Mabinogion,' or stories for the young (the word has a special meaning but is loosely used), five deal with Arthurian themes. Two, *Kilhwch and Olwen* and *The Dream of Rhonabwy*, are British; the other three are based on French originals. In *The Dream of Rhonabwy* Arthur and Kai appear; 'Trystan the son of Tallwch' and 'March [Mark] the son of Meirchion, cousin unto Arthur' are named; Mount Badon is mentioned, and the fatal battle at Camlan with Mordred is referred to in some detail. As the story is a dream, the confusion of times, and, in particular, the re-appearance of Arthur after Camlan, must not be regarded as extraordinary. A few illustrative passages are given here.

THE DREAM OF RHONABWY

'Ha, chieftain,' said Rhonabwy, 'why art thou called thus?' 'I will tell thee. I was one of the messengers between Arthur and Medrawd his nephew, at the battle of Camlan; and I was then a reckless youth, and through my desire for battle, I kindled strife between them, and stirred up wrath, when I was sent by Arthur the Emperor to reason with Medrawd, and to show him, that he was his foster-father and his uncle, and to seek for peace, lest the sons of the Kings of the Island of Britain, and of the nobles, should be slain. And whereas Arthur charged me with the fairest sayings he could think of, I uttered unto Medrawd the harshest I could devise. And therefore am I called Iddawc Cordd Prydain, for from this did the battle of Camlan ensue. And three nights before the end of the battle of Camlan I left them, and went to the Llech Las in North Britain to do penance.'

And there I remained doing penance seven years, and after that I gained pardon.'...

And they came to the edge of the ford, and there they beheld Arthur sitting on a flat island below the ford, having Bedwin the Bishop on one side of him, and Gwarthegyd the son of Kaw on the other....

Then came Iddawc and they that were with him, and stood before Arthur and saluted him. 'Heaven grant thee good,' said Arthur. 'And where, Iddawc, didst thou find these little men?' 'I found them, lord, up yonder on the road.' Then the Emperor smiled. 'Lord,' said Iddawc, 'wherefore dost thou laugh?' 'Iddawc,' replied Arthur, 'I laugh not; but it pitith me that men of such stature as these should have this island in their keeping, after the men that guarded it of yore.'...

Then spake a tall and stately man, of noble and flowing speech, saying that it was a marvel that so vast a host should be assembled in so narrow a space, and that it was a still greater marvel that those should be there at that time who had promised to be by mid-day in the battle of Badon, fighting with Osla Gyllellvawr. 'Whether thou mayest choose to proceed or not, I will proceed.' 'Thou sayest well,' said Arthur, 'and we will go altogether.'...

And when they had overtaken the host, Arthur and his army of mighty ones dismounted below Caer Badon, and he perceived that he and Iddawc journeyed the same road as Arthur. And after they had dismounted he heard a great tumult and confusion amongst the host, and such as were then at the flanks turned to the centre, and such as had been in the centre moved to the flanks. And then, behold, he saw a knight coming, clad, both he and his horse, in mail, of which the rings were whiter than the whitest lily, and the rivets redder than the ruddiest blood. And he rode amongst the host.

'Iddawc,' said Rhonabwy, 'will yonder host flee?' 'King Arthur never fled, and if this discourse of thine were heard, thou wert a lost man. But as to the knight whom thou seest yonder, it is Kai. The fairest horseman is Kai in all Arthur's Court; and the men who are at the front of the army hasten to the rear to see Kai ride, and the men who are in the centre flee to the side, from the shock of his horse. And this is the cause of the confusion of the host.'

KILHWCH AND OLWEN

The Arthur of *Kilhwch and Olwen* bears little resemblance to the king of later chivalric legend, except, perhaps, in the magnitude of his warrior retinue, chief among whom are Bedwyr and Kai. In the story, Kilhwch, a cousin of Arthur, is desirous of wedding Olwen, daughter of Yspaddaden Penkawr, and rides forth to seek Arthur's assistance.

And the youth pricked forth upon a steed with head dappled grey, of four winters old, firm of limb, with shell-formed hoofs, having a bridle of linked gold on his head, and upon him a saddle of costly gold. And in the youth's hand were two spears of silver, sharp, well-tempered, headed with steel, three ells in length, of an edge to wound the wind, and cause blood to flow, and swifter than the fall of the dewdrop from the blade of reed-grass upon the earth when the dew of June is at the heaviest. A gold-hilted sword was upon his thigh, the blade of which was of gold, bearing a cross of inlaid gold of the hue of the lightning of heaven: his war-horn was of ivory. Before him were two brindled white-breasted greyhounds, having strong collars of rubies about their necks, reaching from the shoulder to the ear. And the one that was on the left side bounded across to the right side, and the one on the right to the left, and like two sea-swallows sported around him. And his courser cast up four sods with his four hoofs, like four swallows in the air, about his head, now above, now below. About him was a four-cornered cloth of purple, and an apple of gold was at each corner, and every one of the apples was of the value of an hundred kine. And there was precious gold of the value of three hundred kine upon his shoes, and upon his stirrups, from his knee to the tip of his toe. And the blade of grass bent not beneath him, so light was his courser's tread as he journeyed towards the gate of Arthur's Palace.

The traditional gateward announces Kilhwch as handsomer than the 'nine supreme sovereigns, all handsome men,' they had encountered in various adventures. Kilhwch, admitted to the feast, asks a boon, and is told in reply:

'Thou shalt receive the boon whatsoever thy tongue may name, as far as the wind dries, and the rain moistens, and the sun revolves, and the sea encircles, and the earth extends; save only my ship; and my mantle; and Caledvwlch, my sword; and Rhongomyant, my lance; and Wynebgrwrthucher, my shield; and Carnwenhan, my dagger; and Gwenhwyvar, my wife. By

the truth of Heaven, thou shalt have it cheerfully, name what thou wilt.' 'I would that thou dress my hair.' 'That shall be granted thee.'

Kilhwch then states his desire for Olwen, and adjures the king by a multitude of heroes and ladies all precisely cited by name and described circumstantially through many pages of the tale, which enshrines both here and elsewhere the fragments of forgotten stories.

Then said Arthur, 'Oh! chieftain, I have never heard of the maiden of whom thou speakest, nor of her kindred, but I will gladly send messengers in search of her. Give me time to seek her.' And the youth said, 'I will willingly grant from this night to that at the end of the year to do so.' Then Arthur sent messengers to every land within his dominions to seek for the maiden; and at the end of the year Arthur's messengers returned without having gained any knowledge or intelligence concerning Olwen more than on the first day. Then said Kilhwch, 'Every one has received his boon, and I yet lack mine. I will depart and bear away thy honour with me.' Then said Kai, 'Rash chieftain! dost thou reproach Arthur? Go with us, and we will not part until thou dost either confess that the maiden exists not in the world, or until we obtain her.' Thereupon Kai rose up. Kai had this peculiarity, that his breath lasted nine nights and nine days under water, and he could exist nine nights and nine days without sleep. A wound from Kai's sword no physician could heal. Very subtle was Kai. When it pleased him he could render himself as tall as the highest tree in the forest. And he had another peculiarity,—so great was the heat of his nature, that, when it rained hardest, whatever he carried remained dry for a handbreadth above and a handbreadth below his hand; and when his companions were coldest, it was to them as fuel with which to light their fire.

And Arthur called Bedwyr, who never shrank from any enterprise upon which Kai was bound. None was equal to him in swiftness throughout this island except Arthur and Drych Ail Kibddar. And although he was one-handed, three warriors could not shed blood faster than he on the field of battle. Another property he had; his lance would produce a wound equal to those of nine opposing lances....

They journeyed until they came to a vast open plain, wherein they saw a great castle, which was the fairest of the castles of the

world. And they journeyed that day until the evening, and when they thought they were nigh to the castle, they were no nearer to it than they had been in the morning. And the second and the third day they journeyed, and even then scarcely could they reach so far. And when they came before the castle, they beheld a vast flock of sheep, which was boundless and without an end. And upon the top of a mound there was a herdsman, keeping the sheep. And a rug made of skins was upon him; and by his side was a shaggy mastiff, larger than a steed nine winters old. Never had he lost even a lamb from his flock, much less a large sheep. He let no occasion ever pass without doing some hurt and harm. All the dead trees and bushes in the plain he burnt with his breath down to the very ground.

After many adventures the heroes obtain sight of Olwen.

The maiden was clothed in a robe of flame-coloured silk, and about her neck was a collar of ruddy gold, on which were precious emeralds and rubies. More yellow was her head than the flower of the broom, and her skin was whiter than the foam of the wave, and fairer were her hands and her fingers than the blossoms of the wood anemone amidst the spray of the meadow fountain. The eye of the trained hawk, the glance of the three-mewed falcon was not brighter than hers. Her bosom was more snowy than the breast of the white swan, her cheek was redder than the reddest roses. Whoso beheld her was filled with her love. Four white trefoils sprung up wherever she trod. And therefore was she called Olwen.

Yspaddaden Penkawr is a ferocious being who lays upon Kilhwch labours more monstrous and multitudinous than Aetes laid upon Jason or Eurystheus upon Hercules. The most important demand was for 'the comb and scissors that are between the two ears of Twrch Trwyth, the son of Prince Tared.' This is really the last of a long series of linked tasks; for scissors and comb cannot be obtained till something else is first done, and that cannot be done till something else is accomplished, and so on. To all the demands of the ogre, Kilhwch replies, 'It will be easy for me to compass this, although thou mayest think that it will not be easy.'

All this part of the story embodies the half-forgotten relics of many ancient wonder-tales of bird and beast and wind and water. Thus, 'as Kai and Bedwyr sat on a beacon cairn on the summit of Plinlimmon, in the highest wind that ever was in the world, they looked around them, and saw a great smoke towards the south, afar off, which did not bend with the wind. Then said Kai, By the hand of my friend, behold, yonder is the fire of a robber.' They find the robber, whose beard proves to be one of the

things needful in the quest of Twrch Trwyth. Later in the story Arthur himself joins in the great quest:

Then Arthur summoned unto him all the warriors that were in the three Islands of Britain, and in the three Islands adjacent, and all that were in France and in Armorica, in Normandy and in the Summer Country, and all that were chosen footmen and valiant horsemen. And with all these he went into Ireland. And in Ireland there was great fear and terror concerning him. And when Arthur had landed in the country, there came unto him the saints of Ireland and besought his protection. And he granted his protection unto them, and they gave him their blessing. Then the men of Ireland came unto Arthur, and brought him provisions. And Arthur went as far as Esgeir Oervel in Ireland, to the place where the Boar Trwyth was with his seven young pigs. And the dogs were let loose upon him from all sides. That day until evening the Irish fought with him, nevertheless he laid waste the fifth part of Ireland. And on the day following the household of Arthur fought with him, and they were worsted by him, and got no advantage. And the third day Arthur himself encountered him, and he fought with him nine nights and nine days, and killed no more than one little pig. The warriors inquired of Arthur what was the origin of that swine; and he told them that he was once a king, and that God had transformed him into a swine for his sins....

So they set forth through the sea towards Wales. And Arthur and his hosts, and his horses and his dogs, entered Prydwen, that they might encounter them without delay. Twrch Trwyth landed in Porth Cleis in Dyved, and Arthur came to Mynyw. The next day it was told to Arthur that they had gone by, and he overtook them as they were killing the cattle of Kynnwas Kwrr y Vagyl, having slain all that were at Aber Gleddyf, of man and beast, before the coming of Arthur.

Now when Arthur approached, Twrch Trwyth went on as far as Preseleu, and Arthur and his hosts followed him thither, and Arthur sent men to hunt him; Eli and Trachmyr, leading Drudwyn the whelp of Greid the son of Eri, and Gwarthegyd the son of Kaw, in another quarter, with the two dogs of Glythmyr Ledewic, and Bedwyr leading Cavall, Arthur's own dog....

Twrch Trwyth went from there to between Tawy and Euyas, and Arthur summoned all Cornwall and Devon unto

him, to the estuary of the Severn, and he said to the warriors of this Island, ‘Twrch Trwyth has slain many of my men, but, by the valour of warriors, while I live he shall not go into Cornwall. And I will not follow him any longer, but I will oppose him life to life. Do ye as ye will.’ And he resolved that he would send a body of knights, with the dogs of the Island, as far as Euyas, who should return thence to the Severn, and that tried warriors should traverse the Island, and force him into the Severn. And Mabon the son of Modron came up with him at the Severn, upon Gwynn Mygdwn, the horse of Gweddw, and Goreu the son of Custennin, and Menw the son of Teirgwaedd; this was betwixt Llyn Lliwan and Aber Gwy. And Arthur fell upon him together with the champions of Britain. And Osla Kyllellvawr drew near, and Manawyddan the son of Llyr, and Kacmwri the servant of Arthur, and Gwyngelli, and they seized hold of him, catching him first by his feet, and plunged him in the Severn, so that it overwhelmed him. On the one side, Mabon the son of Modron spurred his steed and snatched his razor from him, and Kyledyr Wyllt came up with him on the other side, upon another steed, in the Severn, and took from him the scissors. But before they could obtain the comb, he had regained the ground with his feet, and from the moment that he reached the shore, neither dog, nor man, nor horse could overtake him until he came to Cornwall. If they had had trouble in getting the jewels from him, much more had they in seeking to save the two men from being drowned. Kacmwri, as they drew him forth, was dragged by two millstones into the deep. And as Osla Kyllellvawr was running after the boar, his knife had dropped out of the sheath, and he had lost it, and after that, the sheath became full of water, and its weight drew him down into the deep, as they were drawing him forth.

Then Arthur and his hosts proceeded until they overtook the boar in Cornwall, and the trouble which they had met with before was mere play to what they encountered in seeking the comb. But from one difficulty to another, the comb was at length obtained. And then he was hunted from Cornwall, and driven straight forward into the deep sea. And thenceforth it was never known whither he went; and Aned and Aethlem with him. Then went Arthur to Gelli Wic, in Cornwall, to anoint himself, and to rest from his fatigues....

Then Kilhwch set forward, and Goreu the son of Custennin with him, and as many as wished ill to Yspaddaden Penkawr. And they took the marvels with them to his court. And Kaw of North Britain came and shaved his beard, skin, and flesh clean off to the very bone from ear to ear. ‘Art thou shaved, man?’ said Kilhwch. ‘I am shaved,’ answered he. ‘Is thy daughter mine now?’ ‘She is thine,’ said he, ‘but therefore needest thou not thank me, but Arthur who hath accomplished this for thee. By my free will thou shouldest never have had her, for with her I lose my life.’ Then Goreu the son of Custennin seized him by the hair of his head, and dragged him after him to the keep, and cut off his head and placed it on a stake on the citadel. Then they took possession of his castle, and of his treasures.

And that night Olwen became Kilhwch’s bride, and she continued to be his wife as long as she lived. And the hosts of Arthur dispersed themselves, each man to his own country. And thus did Kilhwch obtain Olwen, the daughter of Yspaddaden Penkawr.

The Mabinogion translated by LADY CHARLOTTE GUEST.

The last introductory allusion we quote is from a fragment of the *Antiocheis* of Joseph of Exeter (fl. 1190), the best of our medieval Anglo-Latin poets. In lines that celebrate the heroes of fabulous British history, thus he writes:

Hinc celebri fato felici floruit ortu
Flos regum Arthurus, cuius tamen acta stupori
Non miciuere minus; totus quod in aure voluptas,
Et populo plaudente favus.

In the second of these lines Tennyson found the motto for his Victorian *Arthuriad*. We cannot deal here with early French or Italian allusions.

GEOFFREY: THE LAST BATTLES

C. H. E. L. I. 256–261. See also *ante*, p. 137. The real father of the Arthurian legend is Geoffrey of Monmouth. How much he derived from ancient sources and how much he invented will probably never be known. What is certain is that Geoffrey’s *History of the Kings of Britain* made Arthur and Merlin the romantic property of all literary Europe. It has been urged that Geoffrey’s book is not really a national history, but a national epic, doing for Britain what the *Aeneid* did for Rome, and finding in the mythical Brutus, grandson of Aeneas, the name-giving founder of the British state. Geoffrey’s history is thus the first *Brut*—for so, in time, all records of early British kings with this mythical starting-point came to be called. The first six books of *Historia*

Regum Britanniae tell the story of Arthur's predecessors. 'At the close of the sixth book the weird figure of Merlin appears on the scene.... Romance frank and undisguised usurps the place of history. Merlin's magic arts are made largely contributory to the birth of the most renowned Arthur. Uther and Gorlois and Igerna and the castle of Tintagel now take their place, for the first time, in the fabric of Arthurian story.' It is Arthur that is Geoffrey's hero. He knows nothing of Tristram, Lancelot or the Holy Grail; but it was he who, in the Mordred and Guenevere episode, first suggested the love-tragedy that was to become one of the world's imperishable romances. Possibly no work before the age of printed books attained such immediate and astonishing popularity as this *History* by 'the father of British fiction.'

Howbeit, Gawain thus dashing amidst the companies, found at last the opening he longed for, and rushing upon the Emperor forgathered with him man to man. Lucius, then in the flower and prime of youth, had plenty of hardihood, plenty of strength and plenty of prowess, nor was there nought he did more desire than to encounter such a knight as would compel him to prove what he was worth in feats of arms. Wherefore, standing up to Gawain, he rejoiceth to begin the encounter and prideth him therein for that he hath heard such renown of him. Long while did the battle last betwixt them, and mighty were the blows they dealt one upon other or warded with the shields that covered them as each strove for vantage to strike the death-blow on the other. But whilst that they were thus in the very hottest of the fight, behold the Romans, suddenly recovering their vigour, make a charge upon the Armoricans and come to their Emperor's rescue. Hoel and Gawain and their companies are driven off and sore cut up, until all of a sudden they came up over against Arthur and his company. For Arthur, hearing of the slaughter just inflicted upon his men, had hurried forward with his guard, and drawing forth Caliburn, best of swords, had cheered on his comrades, crying out in a loud voice and hot words: 'What be ye men doing? Will ye let these womanish knaves slip forth of your hands unharmed? Let not a soul of them escape alive!...' Shouting out these reproaches and many more besides, he dashed forward upon the enemy, flung them down, smote them—never a one did he meet but he slew either him or his horse at a single buffet. They fled from him like sheep from a fierce lion madly famishing to devour aught that chance may throw in his way. Nought might armour avail them but that Caliburn would carve their souls from out them with their blood.... Many thousand

Romans fell in this onslaught, and amongst them even the Emperor himself, slain in the midst of his companies by a spear-thrust from a hand unknown. And thus, ever following up their advantage, the Britons, albeit with sore travail, won the victory that day....The body of Lucius he bade bear unto the Senate with a message to say that none other tribute was due from Britain. Then he abode in those parts until after the following winter, and busied him with bringing the cities of the Allobroges into his allegiance. But the summer coming on, at which time he designed to march unto Rome, he had begun to climb the passes of the mountains, when message was brought him that his nephew Mordred, unto whom he had committed the charge of Britain, had tyrannously and traitorously set the crown of the kingdom upon his own head, and had linked him in unhallowed union with Guenevere the Queen in despite of her former marriage....So soon therefore as the infamy of the aforesaid crime did reach his ears, he forthwith deferred the expedition he had emprised against Leo, the King of the Romans, and sending Hoel, Duke of the Armoricans, with the Gaulish army to restore peace in those parts, he straightway hastened back to Britain with none save the island Kings and their armies. Now, that most detestable traitor Mordred had despatched Cheldric, the Duke of the Saxons, into Germany, there to enlist any soever that would join him, and hurry back again with them, such as they might be, the quickest sail he could make. He pledged himself, moreover, by covenant to give him that part of the island which stretcheth from the river Humber as far as Scotland, and whatsoever Horsus and Hengist had possessed in Kent in the time of Vortigern. Cheldric, accordingly, obeying his injunctions, had landed with eight hundred ships full of armed Paynims, and doing homage unto this traitor did acknowledge him as his liege lord and king. He had likewise gathered into his company the Scots, Picts and Irish, and whomsoever else he knew bare hatred unto his uncle. All told, they numbered some eight hundred thousand Paynims and Christians, and in their company and relying on their assistance he came to meet Arthur on his arrival at Richborough haven, and in the battle that ensued did inflict sore slaughter on his men when they were landed. For upon that day fell Angusel, King of Albany, and Gawain, the King's nephew, along with numberless other. Eventus, son of Urien his

brother, succeeded Angusel in the kingdom, and did afterward win great renown for his prowesses in those wars. At last, when with sore travail they had gained possession of the coast, they revenged them on Mordred for this slaughter, and drove him fleeing before them. For inured to arms as they had been in so many battles, they disposed their companies right skilfully, distributing horse and foot in parties, in such wise that in the fight itself, when the infantry were engaged in the attack or defence, the horse charging slantwise at full speed would strain every endeavour to break the enemies' ranks and compel them to take to flight. Howbeit, the Perjurer again collected his men together from all parts, and on the night following marched into Winchester. When this was reported unto Queen Guenevere, she was forthwith smitten with despair and fled from York unto Caerleon, where she purposed thenceforth to lead a chaste life amongst the nuns, and did take the veil of their order in the church of Julius the Martyr.

But Arthur, burning with yet hotter wrath for the loss of so many hundred comrades-in-arms, after first giving Christian burial to the slain, upon the third day marched upon that city and beleaguered the miscreant that had ensconced him therein. Natheless, he was not minded to renounce his design, but encouraging his adherents by all the devices he could, marched forth with his troops and arrayed them to meet his uncle. At the first onset was exceeding great slaughter on either side, the which at last waxed heavier upon his side and compelled him to quit the field with shame. Then, little caring what burial were given unto his slain, 'borne by the swift-oared ferryman of flight,' he started in all haste on his march toward Cornwall. Arthur, torn by inward anxiety for that he had so often escaped him, pursued him into that country as far as the river Camel, where Mordred was awaiting his arrival. For Mordred, being, as he was, of all men the boldest and ever the swiftest to begin the attack, straightway marshalled his men in companies, preferring rather to conquer or to die than to be any longer continually on the flight in this wise. There still remained unto him out of the number of allies I have mentioned sixty thousand men, and these he divided into three battalions, in each of which were six thousand six hundred and sixty-six men-at-arms. Besides these, he made out of the rest that were over a single battalion, and appointing captains to

each of the others, took command of this himself. When these were all posted in position, he spake words of encouragement unto each in turn, promising them the lands and goods of their adversaries in case they fought out the battle to a victory. Arthur also marshalled his army over against them, which he divided into nine battalions of infantry formed in square with a right and left wing, and having appointed captains to each, exhorted them to make an end utterly of these perjurers and thieves, who, brought from foreign lands into the island at the bidding of a traitor, were minded to reave them of their holdings and their honours. He told them, moreover, that these motley barbarians from divers kingdoms were a pack of raw recruits that knew nought of the usages of war, and were in no wise able to make stand against valiant men like themselves, seasoned in so many battles, if they fell upon them hardily and fought like men. And whilst the twain were still exhorting their men on the one side and the other, the battalions made a sudden rush each at other and began the battle, struggling as if to try which should deal their blows the quicker. Straight, such havoc is wrought upon both sides, such groaning is there of the dying, such fury in the onset, as it would be grievous and burdensome to describe. Everywhere are wounders and wounded, slayers and slain. And after much of the day had been spent on this wise, Arthur at last, with one battalion wherein were six thousand six hundred and sixty-six men, made a charge upon the company wherein he knew Mordred to be, and hewing a path with their swords, cut clean through it and inflicted a most grievous slaughter. For therein fell that accursed traitor and many thousands along with him. Natheless not for the loss of him did his troops take to flight, but rallying together from all parts of the field, struggle to stand their ground with the best hardihood they might. Right passing deadly is the strife betwixt the foes, for well-nigh all the captains that were in command on both sides rushed into the press with their companies and fell....Even the renowned King Arthur himself was wounded deadly, and was borne thence unto the island of Avalon for the healing of his wounds.

translated by Dr SEBASTIAN EVANS.

LAYAMON'S BRUT: THE PASSING

C. H. E. L. I. 263-267. The value of the Arthurian story as matter for verse was first perceived in France. The earliest surviving standard example of metrical narrative derived from Geoffrey is *Li Romans de Brut* of Wace, a Norman, whose poem was completed in 1155. Some of his matter is independent of Geoffrey's *History*. Thus, it is Wace, not Geoffrey, who first tells of the Round Table. The poem, fifteen thousand lines long, written in lightly rhyming verse and in a familiar language, was very popular.

Cornuaille a Mordrès tenue,
L'autre tere a tote perdue;
Par mer et par terre envoia,
Sarrasins et païens manda.
Manda Irois, manda Norois,
Et les Saisnes et les Danois,
Et tous cels qui Artur haoient
Et qui son service cremoient.
Assés lor pramist et dona,
Si com li hom qui besoing a.
Artus fu dolans et iriés
Qui de Mordret ne fu vengiés,
Mult li paisa del traïtor
Qui en sa tere est à sojor.
En Cornuaille est gent atret
Et plus se paine qu'il en et;
Car encor il lui tend entoise,
Artus le sot, forment li poise.
Sa gent somont de si à l'Hombre,
Tant en i ot nus n'en soit nombre;
Grans fu li os que li rois ot,
Là quist Mordret où il le sot.
Ocire voloit et destruire
Son traitor et son parjuire;
Et Mordrès n'ot de fuir que,
Mius se velt mettre en aventure,
Et en abandon de morir
Que tante fois de camp fuir.
Joste Camblan fu li bataille,
A l'entrée de Cornuaille.
Par grant ire fu assamblée,
Et par grant malaltant jostée,
Et par grant ire fu emprise,
Et mult i ot fait grant ocise.
Ne sai dire qui mius le fist,
Ne qui perdi, ne qui conquist,
Ne qui caï, ne qui estut,
Ne qui venqui, ne qui morut.

Mais grans fu d'ambes pars li perte,
Des mors fu li tere coverte
Et del sanc des ocis sanglante.
La péri la bele jovante
Que rois Artus avoit norie
Et de pluisors teres coillie;
Et cil de la Table Roonde
Dont tex los fu par tot le monde.
Ocis fu Mordrès en l'estor
Et de ses homes li pluisor,
Et de la gent Artur la flor
Et li plus fort et li millor.
Artus, se l'estore ne ment,
Fu navrés el cors mortelement;
En Avalon se fit porter
Por ses plaies médiciner.
Encor i est, Breton l'atendant,
Si com il dient et entendant;
De là vandra, encor puet vivre.
Maistre Gasse qui fist cest livre,
N'en valt plus dire de sa fin
Qu'en dist li profètes Merlin.
Merlins dist d'Artus, si ot droit,
Que sa fin dotose seroit.
Li profete dit vérité:
Tostans en a l'on puis doté
Et dotera, ce crois, vos dis,
Où il soit mors, où il soit vis.
Porter se fist en Avalon,
Por voir, puis l'incarnation,
Sis cens et quarante deus ans;
Damage fu qu'il not enfans.
Al fil Cador de Costentin
De Cornuaille, un sien cosin,
Livra son raine, si li dist
Qu'il fust rois tant qu'il revenist.
Chil prist la terre, si la tint,
Mais ainc puis Artus ne revint.

The 'Maistre Gasse' is Wace himself. It will be noticed that, to Geoffrey's passing of Arthur, Wace has added the story of his expected return. Wace's *Brut* is of special interest in English literature because it was the foundation of Layamon's *Brut*, the only English contribution of any importance to Arthurian poetry before the fourteenth century. Layamon added something of his own in the essentially English character of his style and matter—rugged and primitive though these may seem—and he gives us, as well, details found neither in Wace nor Geoffrey. It may be added that the poem in its fullest form (MS Cott. Calig. A ix) contains over thirty-two thousand lines. The extract (to be read downwards) begins at l. 28486.

Modred wes i Cornwale,
& somnede cnihtes feole.
to Irlonde he sende
a-neoste his sonde.
to Sex-londe he sende
aneouste his sonde.
to Scotlonde he sende
aneouste his sonde.
he hehten heom to cume alle
anan,
that wolde lond habben,
other seolver other gold,
other ahte other lond.
on ælchere wisen
he warnede hine seolven,
swa deth ælc witer mon
tha neode cumeth uvenan.
Arthur that iherde,
wrathest kinge,
that Modred wæs i Cornwale
mid muciele monweorede,
& ther wolde abiden
that Arthur come rideñ.
Arthur sende sonde
yeond al his kine-londe,
and to cumen alle hehte
that quic wes on londe,
tha to vihte oht weoren
wepnen to beren.
& wah swa hit for-sete
that the king hete.

the king hine wolde a folden
quid al for-bernen.
Hit læc toward hirede
folc unimete
ridinde & ganninde
swa the rein falleth adune.
Arthur for to Cornwale
mid unimete ferde.
Modred that iherde
& him to-yeines heolde
mid unimete folke,
ther weore monie væie.
uppen there Tambre
heo tuhten to-gadere,
the stude hatte Camelford,
ever mare ilast that ilke weorde.
And at Camelforde wes isom-
ned
sixti thusend,
& ma thusend ther to.
Modred wes heore ælder.
Tha thiderward gon ride
Arthur the riche
mid unimete folke,
væie thah hit weore.
Uppe there Tambre
heo tuhte to-somne,
heven here-marken,
halden to-gadere,
luken swoerd longe,
leiden o the helmen.

fur ut sprengen,
 speren brastlien,
 sceldes gonen scanen,
 scaftes to-breken.
 ther faht al to-somne
 folc unimete.
 Tambre wes on flode
 mid unimete blode.
 mon i than fihte
 non ther ne mihte
 ikennen nenne kempe
 no wha dude wурse no wha bet,
 swa that withe wes imenged.
 for ælc sloh adun riht,
 weore heswein weore he cniht.
 Ther wes Modred of-slahe
 and idon of lif-dahe.
 and alle his cnihtes
 islahe in than fihte.
 Ther weoren of-slahe
 alle tha snelle,
 Arthures hered-men
 hehe and lowe,
 and tha Bruttes alle
 of Arthures borde,
 and alle his fosterlinges
 of feole kineriches.
 And Arthur forwunded
 mid wal-spere brade,
 fiftene he hafde
 feondliche wunden,
 mon mihte i thare lasten
 twa gloven ithraste.
 Tha nas ther na mare
 i than fehte to lave
 of twa hundred thousand mon-
 nen
 tha ther leien to-hauwen,
 buten Arthur the king ane,
 & of his cnihtes tweien.

Arthur wes for-wunded
 wunder ane swithe.
 ther to him com a cnave
 the wes of his cunne,
 he wes Cadore sune
 the eorles of Cornwaile.
 Constantin hehte the cnave,
 he wes than kinge deore.
 Arthur him lokede on
 ther he lai on folden,
 and thas word seide
 mid sorhfulle heorte:
 Constaetin thu art wilcume,
 thu weore Cadore sone.
 ich the bitache here
 mine kineriche,
 and wite mine Bruttes
 a to thines lifes
 and hald heom alle tha lahen
 tha habbeoth istonden a mine
 dahen,
 and alle tha lahen gode
 tha bi Utheres dahen stode
 And ich wulle varen to Avalun,
 to vairest alre maidene,
 to Argante there quene,
 alven swithe sceone,
 & heo scal mine wunden
 makien alle isunde,
 al hal me makien
 mid haleweie drenchen.
 And seothe ich cumen wulle
 to mine kineriche
 and wunien mid Brutten
 mid muchelere wunne.
 Æfnæ than worden
 ther com of se wenden
 that wes an sceort bat lithen,
 sceoven mid uthen.
 and twa wimmen ther inne,

wunderliche idihte,
and heo nomen Arthur anan,
and aneouste hine vereden,
and softe hine adun leiden,
& forth heo gunnen lithen.
Tha wes hit iwurthen
that Merlin seide whilen,
that weore unimete care
of Arthures forth-fare.
Bruttis ileveth yete
that he beon on live,
and wunnien in Avalun
mid fairest alre alven,

and lokieth evere Bruttis yete
whan Arthur cumen lith.
Nis naver the mon iboren
of naver nane burde icoren,
the cunne of than sothe,
of Arthure sugen mare.
Bute while wes an witehe,
Mærlin ihate,
he bodede mid worde,
his quithes weoren sothe,
that an Arthur sculde yete
cum Brutten to fulste.

Modred was in Cornwall, and gathered many knights; to Ireland he sent his messengers quickly; to Saxland he sent his messengers quickly; to Scotland he sent his messengers quickly; he ordered them all to come anon, that would have land, or silver, or gold, or possessions, or land; in each wise he protected himself (each individual);—so doth each prudent man upon whom cometh need. Arthur that heard, wratest of kings, that Modred was in Cornwall with a mickle army, and there would abide until Arthur approached. Arthur sent messengers over all his kingdom, and bade all to come that was alive in land, that to fight were good, weapons to bear; and whoso it neglected, that the king commanded, the king would him all consume alive in the land. Innumerable folk it came toward the host, riding and on foot, as the rain down falleth! Arthur marched to Cornwall, with an immense army. Modred heard that, and advanced against him with innumerable folk,—there were many fated! Upon the Tambre they came together; the place hight Camelford, evermore lasted the same word. And at Camelford was assembled sixty thousand, and more thousands thereto; Modred was their chief. Then thitherward gan ride Arthur the mighty, with innumerable folk,—fated though it were! Upon the Tambre they encountered together; elevated their standards; advanced together; drew their long swords, smote on the helms; fire out sprang; spears splintered; shields gan shiver; shafts brake in pieces! There fought all together innumerable folk! Tambre was in flood (flooded) with blood to excess; there might no man in the fight know any warrior, nor who did worse, nor who better, so was the conflict mingled! For each slew downright, were he swain, were he knight. There was Modred slain, and deprived of life-day, and all his knights slain in the fight. There were slain all the brave, Arthurs warriors, high and low, and all the Britons of Arthurs board, and all his dependants, of many kingdoms. And Arthur wounded with broad slaughter-spear; fifteen dreadful wounds he had; in the least one might thrust two gloves! Then was there no more remained in the fight, of two hundred thousand men that there lay hewed in pieces, except Arthur the king alone, and two of his knights. Arthur was wounded wondrously much. There came to him a lad, who was of his kindred; he was Cadors son, the earl of Cornwall; Constantine the lad hight, he was dear to

the king. Arthur looked on him, where he lay on the ground, and said these words, with sorrowful heart: ‘Constantine, thou art welcome; thou wert Cadors son. I give thee here my kingdom, and defend thou my Britons ever in thy life, and maintain them all the laws that have stood in my days, and all the good laws that in Uthers days stood. And I will fare to Avalun, to the fairest of all maidens, to Argante the queen, an elf most fair, and she shall make my wounds all sound; make me all whole with healing draughts. And afterwards I will come to my kingdom, and dwell with the Britons with mickle joy.’ Even with the words there approached from the sea that was a short boat, floating with the waves; and two women therein, wondrously formed; and they took Arthur anon, and bare him quickly, and laid him softly down, and forth they gan depart. Then was it accomplished that Merlin whilom said, that mickle care (sorrow) should be of Arthurs departure. The Britons believe yet that he is alive, and dwelleth in Avalun with the fairest of all elves; and the Britons ever yet expect when Arthur shall return. Was never the man born, of ever any lady chosen, that knoweth of the sooth, to say more of Arthur. But whilom was a sage hight Merlin; he said with words, —his sayings were sooth,—that an Arthur should yet come to help the Britons.

text, with literal translation, edited by
SIR FREDERIC MADDEN, 1847 (revised).

MERLIN

C. H. E. L. i. 268–269. Not the least remarkable fact about the story of King Arthur is its rapid development as the centre of many gravitating, planetary stories, at first quite independent, but now unchangeably part of the great Arthurian system. Thus we have the stories of Merlin, of Gawain, of Lancelot, of Tristram, of Perceval, and of the Grail. A full account of these important associated legends belongs to the history of French and German rather than of English literature. ‘Not until the fourteenth century do we come across a single English writer whose name is to be mentioned in the same breath with those of Chrétien de Troyes and the authors of the French prose romances, or of Wolfram von Eschenbach, Gottfried von Strassburg and Hartmann von Aue.’ The earliest personage associated with Arthur is Merlin, and Geoffrey is really the father of both.

In origin Merlin may have been a Welsh wizard-bard, but it is with the 17th chapter of Geoffrey’s book vi that he makes his definite appearance in British romance. His character is further developed in a Latin hexameter poem, *Vita Merlini*, composed, probably, about the year 1148 and attributed by several competent authorities to Geoffrey. Later in the same century comes a French poem attributed to Robert de Borron, which, though partly lost, survives in the French prose romance in two parts, known respectively as *Merlin* and *Suite de Merlin*. ‘From the *Suite de Merlin*, of which Malory’s first four books are an abridged version, was derived one of the minor offshoots of Arthurian romance, the striking story of Balin and Balan. The earliest romance of Merlin in English is the metrical *Arthour and Merlin*, translated from a French original at the beginning of the fourteenth century.’ Much better known, however, is the prose *Merlin*, a translation from the

French *Merlin* made about the middle of the fifteenth century. For this see *Merlin*, E.E.T.S. 10, 21, 26, 112. The French original has been edited by H. Oskar Sommer (1894). The *Suite de Merlin* is available in two volumes edited by Gaston Paris and J. Ulrich for the Société des Anciens Textes Français. As this is represented in English literature by Malory's adaptation, no selection need be given at the moment. The complete cycle of French tales will be found in H. Oskar Sommer's great collection, *The Vulgate Version of the Arthurian Romances*, 8 vols., 1909-16. If in the selections here given we seem to depart from English literature, the reader must remember that, in a sense, there was no literature of romance specifically English, but a common literature of Christendom.

GAWAIN

C. H. E. L. I. 269-270. 'No knight of the primitive Arthurian fellowship enjoyed a higher renown than Arthur's nephew, Gawayne. Under the name of Gwalchmai, Gawayne figures prominently in the Welsh Triads and in the *Mabinogion*.' He appears in Geoffrey's *History* as Walgainus. 'He is certainly the hero of more episodic romances than any other British knight.' In the earlier tales he is the paragon of knightly courtesy. It is in French story that he assumes his Malorian (and Tennysonian) lightness of character. He is the hero of the finest of all Middle-English metrical romances, *Syr Gawayne and the Grene Knight*, for which see a later page. As Gwalchmai he plays a large part in the story called *Peredur the Son of Evrawc* included in Lady Charlotte Guest's *Mabinogion*. Peredur is Perceval, and the whole story is derived from early French romance—possibly from Chrétien himself. As the non-Malorian Gawayne appears in the selection from *Syr Gawayne and the Grene Knight*, no further illustration need be given at this point.

LANCELOT

C. H. E. L. I. 270-271. The love of Lancelot for Guenevere is now one of the best-known episodes of the Arthurian cycle; but Lancelot is actually a late comer into the legend. After two bare references by name he suddenly appears as the lover of Guenevere in Chrétien's *Li Romans de la Charrette* (c. 1170). The book, to which Chaucer refers in the *Nonne Prestes Tale* and Dante in a moving passage of *Inferno* vi, is no doubt the great prose romance traditionally attributed to Walter Map. See *The Legend of Sir Lancelot du Lac* by Miss Jessie L. Weston, and H. Oskar Sommer's collection, Vols. III, IV, V. The passage that follows is taken from the *Li Romans de la Charrette*. Sir Gawayne and an unnamed knight go forth to rescue Queen Guenevere, who is in danger. The nameless knight (who is Sir Lancelot du Lac) gets into a cart driven by a dwarf and is thus seen by many at a time when to be publicly drawn in a cart was as disgraceful as to stand in the pillory.

In the morning, at daybreak, the damsels of the tower had Mass celebrated on their account, and had them rise and dress. When Mass had been celebrated for them, the knight who had

ridden in the cart sat down pensively at a window, which looked out upon the meadow, and he gazed upon the fields below. The damsel came to another window close by, and there my lord Gawain conversed with her privately for a while about something, I know not what. I do not know what words were uttered, but while they were leaning on the window-sill they saw carried along the river through the fields a bier, upon which there lay a knight, and alongside three damsels walked, mourning bitterly. Behind the bier they saw a crowd approaching, with a tall knight in front, leading a fair lady by the horse's rein. The knight at the window knew that it was the Queen. He continued to gaze at her attentively and with delight as long as she was visible. And when he could no longer see her, he was minded to throw himself out and break his body down below. And he would have let himself fall out had not my lord Gawain seen him, and drawn him back, saying: 'I beg you, sire, be quiet now. For God's sake, never think again of committing such a mad deed. It is wrong for you to despise your life.' 'He is perfectly right,' the damsel says; 'for will not the news of his disgrace be known everywhere? Since he has been upon the cart, he has good reason to wish to die, for he would be better dead than alive. His life henceforth is sure to be one of shame, vexation, and unhappiness.' Then the knights asked for their armour, and armed themselves, the damsel treating them courteously, with distinction and generosity; for when she had joked with the knight and ridiculed him enough, she presented him with a horse and lance as a token of her goodwill. The knights then courteously and politely took leave of the damsel, first saluting her, and then going off in the direction taken by the crowd they had seen. Thus they rode out from the town without addressing them. They proceeded quickly in the direction they had seen taken by the Queen, but they did not overtake the procession, which had advanced rapidly. After leaving the fields, the knights enter an enclosed place, and find a beaten road. They advanced through the woods until it might be six o'clock, and then at a crossroads they met a damsel, whom they both saluted, each asking and requesting her to tell them, if she knows, whither the Queen has been taken. Replying intelligently, she said to them: 'If you would pledge me your word, I could set you on the right road and path, and I would tell you the name of the country and of the knight who is conducting her;

but whoever would essay to enter that country must endure sore trials, for before he could reach there he must suffer much.' Then my lord Gawain replies: 'Damsel, so help me God, I promise to place all my strength at your disposal and service, whenever you please, if you will tell me now the truth.' And he who had been on the cart did not say that he would pledge her all his strength; but he proclaims, like one whom love makes rich, powerful and bold for any enterprise, that at once and without hesitation he will promise her anything she desires, and he puts himself altogether at her disposal. 'Then I will tell you the truth,' says she. Then the damsel relates to them the following story: 'In truth, my lords, Meleagant, a tall and powerful knight, son of the King of Gorre, has taken her off into the kingdom whence no foreigner returns, but where he must perforce remain in servitude and banishment.' Then they ask her: 'Damsel, where is this country? Where can we find the way thither?' She replies: 'That you shall quickly learn; but you may be sure that you will meet with many obstacles and difficult passages, for it is not easy to enter there except with the permission of the king, whose name is Bademagu; however, it is possible to enter by two very perilous paths and by two very difficult passage-ways. One is called "the water-bridge," because the bridge is under water, and there is the same amount of water beneath it as above it, so that the bridge is exactly in the middle; and it is only a foot and a half in width and in thickness. This choice is certainly to be avoided, and yet it is the less dangerous of the two. In addition there are a number of other obstacles of which I will say nothing. The other bridge is still more impracticable and much more perilous, never having been crossed by man. It is just like a sharp sword, and therefore all the people call it "the sword-bridge." Now I have told you all the truth I know.' But they ask of her once again: 'Damsel, deign to show us these two passages.' To which the damsel makes reply: 'This road here is the most direct to the water-bridge, and that one yonder leads straight to the sword-bridge.' Then the knight, who had been on the cart, says: 'Sire, I am ready to share with you without prejudice: take one of these two routes, and leave the other one to me; take whichever you prefer.' 'In truth,' my lord Gawain replies, 'both of them are hard and dangerous: I am not skilled in making such a choice, and hardly know which of them to take;

but it is not right for me to hesitate when you have left the choice to me: I will choose the water-bridge.' The other answers: 'Then I must go uncomplainingly to the sword-bridge, which I agree to do.' Thereupon, they all three part, each one commanding the others very courteously to God. And when she sees them departing, she says: 'Each one of you owes me a favour of my choosing, whenever I may choose to ask it. Take care not to forget that.' 'We shall surely not forget it, sweet friend,' both the knights call out. Then each one goes his own way, and he of the cart is occupied with deep reflections, like one who has no strength or defence against love which holds him in its sway. His thoughts are such that he totally forgets himself, and he knows not whether he is alive or dead, forgetting even his own name, not knowing whether he is armed or not, or whither he is going or whence he came. Only one creature he has in mind, and for her his thought is so occupied that he neither sees nor hears aught else. And his horse bears him along rapidly, following no crooked road, but the best and the most direct; and thus proceeding unguided, he brings him into an open plain.

translated by W. WISTAR COMFORT:
Arthurian Romances by Chrétien de Troyes.

THE GRAIL

C. H. E. L. I. 270-272. The Grail story is another complicated addition to the Arthurian cycle. The prose *Lancelot* referred to in the preceding note is a 'vast compilation, of which there are three clear divisions, the first usually called the *Lancelot* proper, the second the *Quest of the Holy Grail*, and the third the *Morte Arthur*. In the MSS these romances are persistently attributed to Walter Map; one version of the *Quest* is described as having been written by him "for the love of his lord, King Henry, who caused it to be translated from Latin into French". There are two distinct *strata* of Grail legend, usually distinguished as the 'Quest' proper, and the 'Early History' of the Holy Grail. 'In the "Quest" forms of the legend the interest turns mainly upon the personality of the hero, Perceval, and upon his adventures in search of certain talismans, which include a sword, a bleeding lance and a "grail" (either a magic vessel, as in Chrétien, or a stone, as in Wolfram). The "Early History" versions dwell, chiefly, upon the nature and origin of those talismans.' The 'Quest' versions are, as a rule, more archaic than the 'Early History' documents, and have probably a Celtic origin; but the Grail stories proved susceptible of being used in the 12th and 13th centuries for religious purposes, and the Grail (a primitive symbol) came to be identified with the cup

of the Last Supper in which Joseph of Arimathea treasured the blood that flowed from the wounds of Jesus. 'The best-known versions of the "Quest" are the *Conte del Graal*, of which the earlier portions are by Chrétien de Troyes, the *Parzival* of Wolfram von Eschenbach and the Welsh *Mabinogi of Peredur*. Of the "Early History" the chief versions are the *Joseph of Arimathea* and *Merlin* of Robert de Borron, and the *Quête del St Graal* attributed to Map.' See *Studies in the Legend of the Holy Grail* by Alfred Nutt, and Sommer, *Vulgata*, Vol. I (Introduction). The 13th century *Perceval le Gallois* has been translated by Sebastian Evans, whose book contains also a useful discussion of the sources. The passage that follows is taken from this work.

This high history witnesseth us and recordeth that Joseph, who maketh remembrance thereof, was the first priest that sacrificed the body of Our Lord, and forsoomuch ought one to believe the words that come of him. You have heard tell how Perceval was of the lineage of Joseph of Abarimacie, whom God so greatly loved for that he took down His body hanging on the cross, which he would not should lie in the prison there where Pilate had set it. For the highness of the lineage whereof the Good Knight was descended ought one willingly to hear brought to mind and recorded the words that are of him. The story telleth us that he was departed of the hermitage all sound and whole, albeit he hath left Lancelot, for that his wound was not yet healed, but he hath promised him that he will come back to him so soon as he may. He rideth amidst a forest, all armed, and cometh toward evensong to the issue of the forest and seeth a castle before him right fair and well seated, and goeth thitherward for lodging, for the sun was set. He entereth into the castle and alighteth. The lord cometh to meet him that was a tall knight and a red, and had a felon look, and his face scarred in many places; and knight was there none therewithin save only himself and his household.

When he seeth Perceval alighted, he runneth to bar the door, and Perceval cometh over against him. For all greeting, the knight saluteth him thus: 'Now shall you have,' saith he, 'such guerdon as you have deserved. Never again shall you depart hence, for my mortal enemy are you, and right hardy are you thus to throw yourself upon me, for you slew my brother the Lord of the Shadows, and Chaos the Red am I that war upon your mother, and this castle have I reft of her. In like manner will I wring the life out of you or ever you depart hence!' 'Already,' saith Perceval, 'have I thrown myself on this your

hostel to lodge with you, wherefore to blame would you be to do me evil. But lodge me this night as behoveth one knight do for another, and on the morrow at departing let each do the best he may.' 'By my head!' saith Chaos the Red, 'Mortal enemy of mine will I never harbour here save I harbour him dead.' He runneth to the hall above, and armeth himself as swiftly as he may, and taketh his sword all naked in his hand and cometh back to the place where Perceval was, right full of anguish of heart for this that he said, that he would war upon his mother and had reft her of this castle. He flung his spear to the ground, and goeth toward him on foot and dealeth him a huge buffet above the helmet upon the coif of his habergeon, such that he cleaveth the mail and cutteth off two fingers'-breadth of the flesh in such sort that he made him reel three times round.

When Chaos the Red felt himself wounded, he was sore grieved thereof, and cometh toward Perceval and striketh him a great buffet above in the midst of his helmet, so that he made the sparks fly and his neck stoop and his eyes sparkle of stars. And the blow slippeth down on to the shield, so that it is cleft right down to the boss. Perceval felt his neck stiff and heavy, and feeleth that the knight is sturdy and of great might. He cometh back towards him, and thinketh to strike him above in the midst of his head, but Chaos swerved aside from him: howbeit Perceval reached him and caught his right arm and cutteth it sheer from his side, sword and all, and sendeth it flying to the ground, and Chaos runneth upon him, thinking to grapple him with his left arm, but his force was waning; natheless right gladly would be have avenged himself and he might. Howbeit, Perceval setteth on him again that loved him not in his heart, and smiteth him again above on the head, and dealeth him such a buffet as maketh his brains be all to-scattered abroad. His household and servants were at the windows of the hall. When they see that their lord is nigh to the death, they cry to Perceval: 'Sir, you have slain the hardiest knight in the kingdom of Logres, and him that was most redoubted of his enemies; but we can do no otherwise; we know well that this castle is your mother's and ought to be yours. We challenge it not; wherefore may you do your will of whatsoever there is in the castle; but allow us to go to our lord that there lieth dead, and take away the body and set it in some seemly place for the sake of his good knighthood, and for that it

behoveth us so to do.' 'Readily do I grant it you,' saith Perceval. They bear the body to a chapel, then they disarm him and wind him in his shroud. After that they lead Perceval into the hall and disarm him and say to him: 'Sir, you may be well assured that there be none but us twain herewithin and two damsels, and the doors are barred, and behold, here are the keys which we deliver up to you.' 'And I command you,' saith Perceval, 'that you go straightway to my mother, and tell her that she shall see me betimes and I may get done, and so salute her and tell her I am sound and whole. And what is the name of this castle?' 'Sir, it hath for name the Key of Wales, for it is the gateway of the land.'

Perceval lay the night in the castle he had reconquered for his mother, and the morrow, when he was armed, he departed. These promised that they would keep the castle loyally and would deliver it up to his mother at her will. He rode until he came to the tents where the damsels were, and drew rein and listened. But there was not so great joy as when the damsel that rode like a knight and led the Car came thither with Clamados. Great dole heard he that was made, and beating of palms. Wherefore he bethought him what folk they might be. Nathless he was not minded to draw back without entering. He alighted in the midst of the tents and set down his shield and his spear, and seeth the damsels wringing their hands and tearing their hair, and much marvelleth he wherefore it may be. A damsel cometh forward that had set forth from the castle where he had slain the knight: 'Sir, to your shame and ill adventure may you have come hither!' Perceval looketh at her and marvelleth much of that she saith, and she crieth out: 'Lady, behold here him that hath slain the best knight of your lineage! And you, Clamados, that are within there, he hath slain your father and your uncle! Now shall it be seen what you will do!' The Damsel of the Car cometh thitherward and knoweth Perceval by the shield that he bare of sinople with a white hart. 'Sir,' saith she, 'welcome may you be! Let who will make dole, I will make joy of your coming!'

Therewith the Damsel leadeth him into a tent and maketh him sit on a right rich couch; afterward she maketh him be disarmed of her two damsels and clad in a right rich robe. Then she leadeth him to the Queen of the Tents that was still making great dole. 'Lady,' saith the Damsel of the Car, 'Stint your

sorrow, for behold, here is the Good Knight on whose account were the tents here pitched, and on whose account no less have you been making this great joy right up to this very day!' 'Ha,' saith she, 'Is this then the son of the Widow Lady?' 'Yea, certes,' saith the Damsel. 'Ha,' saith the Lady, 'He hath slain me the best knight of all my kin, and the one that protected me from mine enemies.' 'Lady,' saith the Damsel, 'This one will be better able to protect and defend us, for the Best Knight is he of the world and the comeliest.' The Queen taketh him by the hand and maketh him sit beside her. 'Sir,' saith she, 'Howsoever the adventure may have befallen, my heart biddeth me make joy of your coming.' 'Lady,' saith he, 'Gramercy! Chaos would fain have slain me within his castle, and I defended myself to my power.' The Queen looketh at him amidst his face, and is taken with a love of him so passing strong and fervent that she goeth nigh to fall upon him. 'Sir,' saith she, 'And you will grant me your love, I will pardon you of all the death of Chaos the Red.' 'Lady,' saith he, 'Your love am I right fain to deserve, and mine you have.' 'Sir,' saith she, 'How may I perceive that you love me?' 'Lady,' saith he, 'I will tell you. There is no knight in the world that shall desire to do you a wrong, but I will help you against him to my power.' 'Such love,' saith she, 'is the common love that knight ought to bear to lady. Would you do as much for another?' 'Lady,' saith he, 'It well may be, but more readily shall a man give help in one place than in another.' The Queen would fain that Perceval should pledge himself to her further than he did, and the more she looketh at him the better he pleaseth her, and the more is she taken with him and the more desirous of his love. But Perceval never once thought of loving her or another in such wise. He was glad to look upon her, for that she was of passing great beauty, but never spake he nought to her whereby she might perceive that he loved her of inward love. But in no wise might she refrain her heart, nor withdraw her eyes, nor lose her desire. The damsels looked upon her with wonder that so soon had she forgotten her mourning.

translated by Dr SEBASTIAN EVANS:
The High History of the Holy Graal.

TRISTRAM AND ISEULT

C. H. E. L. I. 272–274. The story of Tristram and Iseult is perhaps the oldest and most poetical of the subsidiary Arthurian legends. ‘The earliest known poetical versions of the story are those of the Anglo-Normans, Béroul (*c.* 1150) and Thomas (*c.* 1170), of which we possess only fragments, and which were the foundations respectively of the German poems of Eilhart von Oberge and of Gottfried von Strassburg. A lost *Tristan* poem is also ascribed to Chrétien de Troyes, and is supposed by some to have been used by the writer or writers of the long prose *Tristan* upon which Malory largely drew.’ See *Le Roman de Tristan* (by Thomas), ed. J. Bédier, also his *Tristan et Iseut* (1900), combining the various fragments: English version by Florence Simmonds; *Tristan* (Béroul), ed. E. Muret. A modern French text embodying the fragments of Thomas has been arranged by Herbomez and Beaurieux. The immortal story is perhaps best illustrated by a passage from Miss Weston’s adaptation of Gottfried von Strassburg (*c.* 1210).

So the queen and the princess went their way and told all to their minstrel, for by now Tristan’s health and strength had come back to him; and the ladies looked upon him, and secretly they thought it a strange thing that one so fair in face and so noble in bearing should be but a wandering minstrel, seeking his bread from land to land; and they said between themselves: ‘Twere more fitting that he should be king and lord of some country; many a folk has a less kinglike ruler. Of a sooth, his looks and his lot match each other but ill.’ The queen bade her squire, Paranise, look well to the knight’s harness, and see that it was well polished and in fair order; and this he did and laid all the pieces together. Now, as chance would have it, the princess came and looked upon the armour as it lay, for her heart was heavy within her for the coming conflict, and she took up the sword and drew it out of the scabbard, and gazed on it long and earnestly, and as she did so her eyes fell on the splinter that was lacking. She thought within herself: ‘Now God help me! I ween that the splinter that should be here is in my keeping.’ Then she ran to the casket wherein lay the splinter that her mother had drawn from Morolt’s skull, and fetched it, and laid it on the blade, and lo! it fitted as if it were but one, as in truth it had been not two years back.

Then the maiden’s heart grew cold within her, and her colour changed from red to white, and she said: ‘Ah, unhappy that I am! how came this fatal weapon hither from Cornwall? With this sword was my uncle Morolt surely slain, and ’twas Tristan

slew him. Who gave it to the minstrel Tanris?' And as she thought, suddenly it was as if she saw the name before her, *Tanris, Tristan*, and she knew the one was but the other read backwards, and she cried aloud: 'Ah! my heart forbode this falsehood and this treachery, for since I have looked upon him well and marked his face and bearing, I have known he must be of noble birth. But how dared he come hither with his deadly wound? And we have cherished and healed him! *Healed?* nay, not yet, for this sword shall be his death! Hasten, Iseult, avenge thy wrongs. If he be slain with the sword that slew thine uncle thou hast repaid him well!'

Then she took the sword in both hands and ran swiftly to Tristan's chamber, and stood over him as he lay. 'Yea,' she said, 'art thou *Tristan*?'

'Lady, nay, I am Tanris.'

'That I know well—Tanris and Tristan they are but one traitor. The wrong Tristan did me shall be avenged on Tanris; thou must pay for my uncle's death.'

'Nay, nay, sweetest lady, what wouldest thou do? Think of thine own honour and thy fair name. Thou art woman and maid. If men may accuse thee of murder, thy beauty will be for ever dishonoured, the Sun of Ireland that rejoices so many hearts will have set. A sword becomes not those white hands!'

As he spake, the queen her mother entered. 'How now?' she cried. 'What meaneth this? What doest thou, my daughter? Are these womanly ways? Art thou beside thyself? What wouldest thou with that sword? Is this jest or anger?'

'Ah, lady mother, 'tis our heart-sorrow. See, this is the murderer Tristan, who slew thy brother; now may we avenge ourselves. Let us smite him through with this sword. A better chance shall we never have.'

'This *Tristan*? How dost thou know, daughter?'

'I know it well. He is Tristan. This sword is his; look well on it, and see here the splinter, see how the two fit together! As I laid one on the other I saw well they were but one blade.'

'Ah!' cried the queen, 'Iseult, what hast thou told me? If this indeed be Tristan, then have I been sorely betrayed!'

Iseult lifted the sword again, and drew nearer. 'Stay, Iseult, stay!' cried the queen, 'dost thou not remember how I am pledged to him?'

'I care not, he shall die.'

'Mercy, fair Iseult!' quoth Tristan.

'No mercy shalt thou have, traitor!' said the maiden, 'I will have thy life.'

'Not so, daughter,' said the mother. 'We may not take vengeance on him lest we break our troth and our honour. He is under my protection, life and limb, with all that belongeth to him. I have taken him into my peace, come what may.'

'I thank thee, lady,' said the knight. 'Forget not that I entrusted myself and all I had to thine honour; my life is in thy keeping.'

'Thou liest!' said the maiden, 'I know well what passed, and life and shelter did my mother never swear to *Tristan*.' With that she would have raised the sword again, but her mother stayed her hand. And in sooth even had Tristan been bound and alone with her she would scarce have slain him, for her womanhood fought hard with her anger, till at length her gentle heart conquered, and she cast the sword from her, and fell a-weeping. 'Alas!' she cried, 'that ever I saw this day!'...

Now, when the man and the maid, Tristan and Iseult, had drunk of the potion, Love, who never resteth but besetteth all hearts, crept softly into the hearts of the twain, and ere they were ware of it had she planted her banner of conquest therein, and brought them under her rule. They were one and undivided who but now were twain and at enmity. Gone was Iseult's hatred, no longer might there be strife between them, for Love, the great reconciler, had purified their hearts from all ill will, and so united them that each was clear as a mirror to the other. But one heart had they—her grief was his sadness, his sadness her grief. Both were one in love and sorrow, and yet both would hide it in shame and doubt. She felt shame of her love, and the like did he. She doubted of his love, and he of hers. For though both their hearts were blindly bent to one will, yet was the chance and the beginning heavy to them, and both alike would hide their desire.

When Tristan felt the pangs of love, then he bethought him straightway of his faith and honour, and would fain have set himself free. 'Nay,' he said to himself, 'let such things be, Tristan; guard thee well, lest others perceive thy thoughts.' So would he turn his heart, fighting against his own will, and desiring against his own desire. He would and would not, and, a prisoner,

struggled in his fetters. There was a strife within him, for ever as he looked on Iseult, and love stirred his heart and soul, then did honour draw him back. Yet he must needs follow Love, for his liege lady was she, and in sooth she wounded him more sorely than did his honour and faith to his uncle, though they strove hard for the mastery. For Love looked smiling upon his heart, and led heart and eyes captive; and yet if he saw her not, then was he even more sorrowful. Much he vexed himself, marvelling how he might escape, and saying to his heart: 'Turn thee here or there, let thy desire be other, love and long elsewhere.' Yet ever the more he looked into his heart the more he found that therein was nought but Love—and Iseult.

Even so was it with the maiden: she was as a bird that is snared with lime. When she knew the snare of love and saw that her heart was indeed taken therein, she strove with all her power to free herself, yet the more she struggled the faster was the hold Love laid upon her, and, unwilling, she must follow whither Love led. As with hands and feet she strove to free herself, so were hands and feet even more bound and fettered by the blinding sweetness of the man and his love, and never half a foot's length might she stir save that Love were with her. Never a thought might Iseult think save of Love and Tristan, yet she fain would hide it. Heart and eyes strove with each other; Love drew her heart towards him, and shame drove her eyes away. Thus Love and maiden shame strove together till Iseult wearied of the fruitless strife, and did as many have done before her—vanquished, she yielded herself body and soul to the man, and to Love.

Shyly she looked on him, and he on her, till heart and eyes had done their work. And Tristan, too, was vanquished, since Love would have it none otherwise. Knight and maiden sought each other as often as they might do so, and each found the other fairer day by day. For such is the way of Love, as it was of old, and is to day, and shall be while the world endures, that lovers please each other more as love within them waxeth stronger, even as flowers and fruit are fairer in their fulness than in their beginning; and Love that beareth fruit waxeth fairer day by day till the fulness of time be come.

Love doth the loved one fairer make,
So love a stronger life doth take.
Love's eyes wax keener day by day,
Else would love fade and pass away.

So the ship sailed gaily onwards, even though Love had thus turned two hearts aside, for she who turneth honey to gall, sweet to sour, and dew to flame, had laid her burden on Tristan and Iseult, and as they looked on each other their colour changed from white to red and from red to white, even as it pleased Love to paint them. Each knew the mind of the other, yet was their speech of other things.

adapted by JESSIE L. WESTON:
The Story of Tristan and Iseult.

MARIE DE FRANCE: *LANVAL*

C. H. E. L. I. 274. ‘Many isolated poems dealing with characters and incidents subsequently drawn into the Arthurian medley must have been based upon traditions popularised by the rude art of some obscure minstrels, or story-tellers, “Breton” or other. One of the best known examples of such poems is Marie of France’s lay of *Lanval*, a Celtic fairy-tale quite unconnected, originally, with the Arthurian court’ (c. 1175). Marie (possibly English) wrote in French. Scarcely anything is known of her. Her Lays in their best form are transmitted in MS Harl. 978. Marie is the first poetess of high achievement in our story.

King Arthur—that fearless knight and courteous lord—removed to Wales, and lodged at Caerleon-on-Usk, since the Picts and Scots did much mischief in the land. For it was the wont of the wild people of the north to enter in the realm of Logres, and burn and damage at their will. At the time of Pentecost, the King cried a great feast. Thereat he gave many rich gifts to his counts and barons, and to the Knights of the Round Table. Never were such worship and bounty shown before at any feast, for Arthur bestowed honours and lands on all his servants—save only on one. This lord, who was forgotten and disliked of the King, was named Launfal. He was beloved by many of the Court, because of his beauty and prowess, for he was a worthy knight, open of heart and heavy of hand. These lords, to whom their comrade was dear, felt little joy to see so stout a knight misprized. Sir Launfal was son to a King of high descent, though his heritage was in a distant land. He was of the King’s household, but since Arthur gave him naught, and he was of too proud a mind to pray for his due, he had spent all that he had. Right heavy was Sir Launfal, when he considered these things, for he knew himself taken in the toils. Gentles, marvel

not overmuch hereat. Ever must the pilgrim go heavily in a strange land, where there is none to counsel and direct him in the path.

Now, on a day, Sir Launfal got him on his horse, that he might take his pleasure for a little. He came forth from the city, alone, attended by neither servant nor squire. He went his way through a green mead, till he stood by a river of clear running water. Sir Launfal would have crossed this stream, without thought of pass or ford, but he might not do so, for reason that his horse was all fearful and trembling. Seeing that he was hindered in this fashion, Launfal unbitted his steed, and let him pasture in that fair meadow, where they had come. Then he folded his cloak to serve him as a pillow, and lay upon the ground. Launfal lay in great misease, because of his heavy thoughts, and the discomfort of his bed. He turned from side to side, and might not sleep. Now as the knight looked towards the river he saw two damsels coming towards him; fairer maidens Launfal had never seen. These two maidens were richly dressed in kirtles closely laced and shapen to their persons and wore mantles of a goodly purple hue. Sweet and dainty were the damsels, alike in raiment and in face. The elder of these ladies carried in her hands a basin of pure gold, cunningly wrought by some crafty smith—very fair and precious was the cup; and the younger bore a towel of soft white linen. These maidens turned neither to the right hand nor to the left, but went directly to the place where Launfal lay. When Launfal saw that their business was with him, he stood upon his feet, like a discreet and courteous gentleman. After they had greeted the knight, one of the maidens delivered the message with which she was charged.

‘Sir Launfal, my demoiselle, as gracious as she is fair, prays that you will follow us, her messengers, as she has a certain word to speak with you. We will lead you swiftly to her pavilion, for our lady is very near at hand. If you but lift your eyes you may see where her tent is spread.’

Right glad was the knight to do the bidding of the maidens. He gave no heed to his horse, but left him at his provand in the meadow. All his desire was to go with the damsels, to that pavilion of silk and divers colours, pitched in so fair a place. Certainly neither Semiramis in the days of her most wanton power, nor Octavian, the Emperor of all the West, had so

gracious a covering from sun and rain. Above the tent was set an eagle of gold, so rich and precious, that none might count the cost. The cords and fringes thereof were of silken thread, and the lances which bore aloft the pavilion were of refined gold. No King on earth might have so sweet a shelter, not though he gave in fee the value of his realm. Within this pavilion Launfal came upon the Maiden. Whiter she was than any altar lily, and more sweetly flushed than the new born rose in time of summer heat. She lay upon a bed with napery and coverlet of richer worth than could be furnished by a castle's spoil. Very fresh and slender showed the lady in her vesture of spotless linen. About her person she had drawn a mantle of ermine, edged with purple dye from the vats of Alexandria. By reason of the heat her raiment was unfastened for a little, and her throat and the rondure of her bosom showed whiter and more untouched than hawthorn in May. The knight came before the bed, and stood gazing on so sweet a sight. The Maiden beckoned him to draw near, and when he had seated himself at the foot of her couch, spoke her mind.

'Launfal,' she said, 'fair friend, it is for you that I have come from my own far land. I bring you my love. If you are prudent and discreet, as you are goodly to the view, there is no emperor, nor count, nor king, whose day shall be so filled with riches and with mirth as yours.'

When Launfal heard these words he rejoiced greatly, for his heart was litten by another's torch.

'Fair lady,' he answered, 'since it pleases you to be so gracious, and to dower so graceless a knight with your love, there is naught that you may bid me do—right or wrong, evil or good—that I will not do to the utmost of my power. I will observe your commandment, and serve in your quarrels. For you I renounce my father and my father's house. This only I pray, that I may dwell with you in your lodging, and that you will never send me from your side.'

When the Maiden heard the words of him whom so fondly she desired to love, she was altogether moved, and granted him forthwith her heart and her tenderness. To her bounty she added another gift besides. Never might Launfal be desirous of aught, but he would have according to his wish. He might waste and spend at will and pleasure, but in his purse ever there was to

spare. No more was Launfal sad. Right merry was the pilgrim, since one had set him on the way, with such a gift, that the more pennies he bestowed, the more silver and gold were in his pouch.

But the Maiden had yet a word to say.

'Friend,' she said, 'hearken to my counsel. I lay this charge upon you, and pray you urgently, that you tell not to any man the secret of our love. If you show this matter, you will lose your friend, for ever and a day. Never again may you see my face.' ...

[Launfal returns to his companions, is sued in love by the Queen, and repulses her, foolishly telling her of his marvellous lady, who is thus lost to him. The Queen accuses Launfal of unfaith to the King, and after many long and heavy griefs he is tried for his life.]

Now the judges were about to proclaim their sentence, when, amidst the tumult of the town, there came riding to the palace the flower of all the ladies of the world. She came mounted upon a palfrey, white as snow, which carried her softly, as though she loved her burthen. Beneath the sky was no goodlier steed, nor one more gentle to the hand. The harness of the palfrey was so rich, that no king on earth might hope to buy trappings so precious, unless he sold or set his realm in pledge. The Maiden herself showed such as I will tell you. Passing slim was the lady, sweet of bodice and slender of girdle. Her throat was whiter than snow on branch, and her eyes were like flowers in the pallor of her face. She had a witching mouth, a dainty nose, and an open brow. Her eyebrows were brown, and her golden hair parted in two soft waves upon her head. She was clad in a shift of spotless linen, and above her snowy kirtle was set a mantle of royal purple, clasped upon her breast. She carried a hooded falcon upon her glove, and a greyhound followed closely after. As the Maiden rode at a slow pace through the streets of the city, there was none, neither great nor small, youth nor sergeant, but ran forth from his house, that he might content his heart with so great beauty. Every man that saw her with his eyes, marvelled at a fairness beyond that of any earthly woman. Little he cared for any mortal maiden, after he had seen this sight. The friends of Sir Launfal hastened to the knight, to tell him of his lady's succour, if so it were according to God's will.

'Sir comrade, truly is not this your friend? This lady is neither black nor golden, mean nor tall. She is only the most lovely thing in all the world.'

When Launfal heard this, he sighed, for by their words he knew again his friend. He raised his head, and as the blood rushed to his face, speech flowed from his lips.

'By my faith,' cried he, 'yes, she is indeed my friend. It is a small matter now whether men slay me, or set me free; for I am made whole of my hurt just by looking on her face.'

The Maiden entered in the palace—where none so fair had come before—and stood before the King, in the presence of his household. She loosed the clasp of her mantle, so that men might the more easily perceive the grace of her person. The courteous King advanced to meet her, and all the Court got them on their feet, and pained themselves in her service. When the lords had gazed upon her for a space, and praised the sum of her beauty, the lady spake to Arthur in this fashion, for she was anxious to begone.

'Sire, I have loved one of thy vassals,—the knight who stands in bonds, Sir Launfal. He was always misprized in thy Court, and his every action turned to blame. What he said, that thou knowest; for over hasty was his tongue before the Queen. But he never craved her in love, however loud his boasting. I cannot choose that he should come to hurt or harm by me. In the hope of freeing Launfal from his bonds, I have obeyed thy summons. Let now thy barons look boldly upon my face, and deal justly in this quarrel between the Queen and me.'

The King commanded that this should be done, and looking upon her eyes, not one of the judges but was persuaded that her favour exceeded that of the Queen.

Since then Launfal had not spoken in malice against his lady, the lords of the household gave him again his sword. When the trial had come thus to an end the Maiden took her leave of the King, and made her ready to depart. Gladly would Arthur have had her lodge with him for a little, and many a lord would have rejoiced in her service, but she might not tarry. Now without the hall stood a great stone of dull marble, where it was the wont of lords, departing from the Court, to climb into the saddle, and Launfal by the stone. The Maiden came forth from the doors of the palace, and mounting on the stone, seated herself on the

palfrey, behind her friend. Then they rode across the plain together, and were no more seen.

The Bretons tell that the knight was ravished by his lady to an island, very dim and very fair, known as Avalon. But none has had speech with Launfal and his faery love since then, and for my part I can tell you no more of the matter.

translated by EUGENE MASON: *French Mediaeval Romances from the Lays of Marie de France.*

Two centuries later Thomas Chestre adapted Marie's Lay into the romance of *Launfal*. Here are two typical stanzas:

As rose on rys her rode was red,
The her schon upon her hed,
As gold wyre that schynyth bryght;
Sche hadde a croune upon her molde,
Of ryche stones and of golde,
That lossom lemede lyght.
The lady was clad yn purpere palle,
Wyth gentyll body and myddyll small,
That semely was of syght,
Her mantyll was furryth with whyt ermyn,
Ireversyd jolyf and fyn,
No rychere be ne myght.

Her sadell was semlyly sett,
The sambus wer grene velvet,
Ipaynted with ymagerye,
The bordure was of belles,
Of ryche gold and nothyng elles,
That any man myghte aspye.
In the arsouns, before and behynde,
Were twey stones of Ynde,
Gay for the maystrye;
The paytrellle of her palfraye,
Was worth an erldome, stout and gay,
The best in Lombardye.

RITSON: *Ancient English Metrical Romances.*

THE METRICAL ROMANCES

1200-1500

In a world without printing, where books were manuscripts laboriously produced and therefore few and costly, popular literature was matter for the ear rather than for the eye. The functions of editor, publisher, circulating library—and sometimes of author—were combined in the minstrel, who, with his tales of moving accident by flood and fell, was sure of welcome from the assembled company in hall or bower or market-place, according to his rank and skill. In a barbarous age the scop or gleeman, far-travelled like Widsith, delighted his warrior hearers with tales of battle and strange lands; in a softer age and clime the ambitious troubadour at the court of Raimon or Eleanor disseminated his elaborate lyrics by the mouth of the itinerant *ioglar*. *Beowulf* and *The Battle of Maldon* were story-poems appropriate to an heroic and primitive time. With the development of social amenities during the succeeding centuries arose the demand for a new kind of story-poem—something, as we should now say, a little more sentimental. What kind of poem pleased our English forefathers of the eleventh and twelfth centuries nothing remains to show. The language was the tongue of a subject nation, and, save for the moral compositions of the godly, nothing in it appears to have been committed to writing. The songs of the people, whatever they were, lived on the lips of those who sang them, and have perished with them. Twelfth century France, however, was the home of lyric and romance. It was the land of Bertran de Born and Bernard de Ventadour, of Chrétien de Troyes and Marie de France, of *Lancelot* and *Tristan*, of *Ami et Amile* and *Aucassin et Nicolete*; twelfth century England appears to be the land of little more than *The Debate of Body and Soul* and *Poema Morale*. In France, ‘the old national epics, the *chansons de geste*, were displaced by a new romantic school, which triumphed over the old like a young Olympian dynasty over Saturn and his peers, or like the new comedy of the Restoration over the last Elizabethans. The *chansons de geste* were meant for the hall, for Homeric recitation after supper; the new romances were intended to be read in my lady’s bower; they were for summer leisure and daylight.’ The new romances were, in fact, the nearest approach to popular novels that could exist in the days before printing. In the production of such literature, England was a long way behind France. When France had achieved style and form, England was still content with easy, shambling verse, haphazard spelling and a low literary standard. In fact, it was not until the time of Chaucer that English reached the level of Chrétien’s French, of Wolfram’s German, of Dante’s Italian. A striking peculiarity of many medieval romances must be mentioned. The Virgin cult referred to in a previous section was a symptom of

civilisation—of a romantic interest in woman. In the secular world this was represented by the doctrine of courtly love with its elaborate laws and ritual. Love, as the troubadour lyricists understood it, was the kind of homage paid to a lady that a feudal vassal paid to his overlord; and in this vassalage there were several stages—the devout lover was in succession aspirant, suppliant, suitor and accepted. The attachment was (in the main) fictitious, as the lady was almost invariably married elsewhere. The story of Dante and Beatrice will occur to everyone. The story of Jaufre Rudel is even more remarkable, for he had never seen, and could never see, the lady to whom he paid homage, and no one is certain whether she was meant to be Melisanda of Tripoli or the Virgin herself. This religion of love passed from the lyrics into the stories. It was the duty of every knight to have a lady for whom his deeds were done and to whom his homage was offered—at considerable length. Don Quixote of La Mancha (the noblest knight of them all) with his peerless Dulcinea del Toboso, though drawn much later, and drawn, too, with kindly laughter, embodies this ideal love in its extremes of fantastic devotion and fantastic absurdity. The rhetorical ‘love interest’ of much modern literature can be traced to the fashion set by eleventh century troubadour poetry. The English were characteristically less interested than the French in the lengthy and elaborate rhetoric of courtly love, and English versions of French romances naturally tend to abbreviation as the German versions naturally tend to distension. The English liked the minstrels to cut the cackle and come to the ‘osse’; and the minstrels, who lived to please and must please to live, gave the public what the public wanted. Of course there was not one literary public then any more than now; the available literature had its long range from tragedy to trash, and the minstrels themselves, who were not merely the singers and actors, but the journalists and gossips of their day, resembled the modern ‘professional’ in extremes of success and seediness. The general subject-matter of the romances has been summed up for us in one of the happy indispensable phrases of history. Jean Bodel, at ll. 6-7 of his *Chanson des Saisnes* [Saxons] or *Guiteclin de Sassoigne* (13th century), declares that

Ne sont que trois matières à nul home antendant,
De France et de Bretaigne et de Rome la grant.

The ‘matter of France’ was found in stories of Charlemagne and the Twelve Peers and the subsidiary or contending figures—Roland, Oliver, Ferumbras, Ogier the Dane, Huon of Bordeaux and the Four Sons of Aymon. The ‘matter of Britain’ was, briefly, the Arthurian legend. The ‘matter of Rome the great’ was all classical antiquity, as far as it was known—stories of Troy (like *Troilus and Cressida*), stories of Thebes (like *Palamon and Arcite*), stories out of Ovid (the author of *Ars Amatoria* being a favoured figure in the days of courtly love) and, above all, stories of Alexander, who usually figures as a feudal sovereign, with

Alle his dukes and barouns hende,
Eorles, knightis, clerkis wise.

But there were other stories that cannot be ranged under the three ‘matters’—stories from the East, like *Flores and Blancheflour*, *Barlaam and Josaphat* and *The Seven Sages*, the story of Roberd of *Cisyle* (familiar in two modern

poems) and the wildly unhistorical *Richard Coer de Lion*, in which (says Ten Brink) the hero has all the arrogance and unbridled coarseness of the medieval John Bull. ‘The varieties of style in the English romances are very great, under an apparent monotony and poverty of type. Between *Sir Beves of Hamtoun* and *Syr Garwayne and the Grene Knight* there is as wide an interval as between (let us say) Monk Lewis and Scott, or G. P. R. James and Thackeray....As regards verse, there are the two great orders, riming and blank alliterative. Of riming measures the most usual are the short couplet of octosyllabic lines, and the stanza called *rime couée, rithmus caudatus.*’ The quoted passages from *King Horn* and *Havelok* exemplify various qualities (and lengths) of the riming couplet. ‘*Sir Thopas* may be taken as the standard of the *rithmus caudatus*, but *Sir Thopas* itself shows that variations are admitted, and there are several kinds, besides, which Chaucer does not introduce.’ For other examples see *C. H. E. L.* 1. 288-290. ‘Alliterative blank verse comes up in the middle of the fourteenth century and was chiefly used for romance....Where the verse came from is not known clearly to anyone and can only be guessed.’ The new alliterative verse was not a battered survival of the old English line, but a regular and clearly understood form. ‘It must have been hidden away somewhere underground—continuing in a purer tradition than happens to have found its way into extant manuscripts—till, at last, there is a striking revival in the reign of Edward III....Plainly, many things went on besides what is recorded in the surviving manuscripts.’ How noble the result can be seen in *Syr Garwayne*, *Pearl*, and, later still, in *Piers Plowman*.

French romances like the *chantefable* called *Aucassin et Nicolet* are familiar to most readers. To illustrate the French manner in romance we therefore give a passage from *Blonde d’Oxford et Jean de Dammartin* (1280) by the *trouvère* Philippe de Beaumanoir (or de Remi) whose only other known work is the *Roman de La Manekine*. The poem is over seven thousand lines long in octosyllabic couplets. The selection begins at l. 5619.

BLONDE OF OXFORD

JEAN DE DAMMARTIN, a young Frenchman of noble birth, but straitened means, sought his fortune in England. He became squire to the Earl of Oxford. A mutual attachment between him and the Earl’s daughter Blonde was crossed by the father, who insisted on marrying Blonde to the Earl of Gloucester. Jean carried the lady off, fought his way home to France, was made Lord of Dammartin by the king, and was reconciled to the Earl of Oxford, who came to Dammartin to join the French king at the festivities which were to mark Jean’s knighthood and wedding.

Now is Blonde light of heart to find herself accorded with her father. The news soon spread abroad throughout the town of Dammartin that the lady’s father was coming: then said one to the other, ‘Now it behoveth us to adorn our town.’ Then might you see them unfold linen cloths and cover the streets so closely that no man might see the sky; on either side, from the windows

of the houses, hung so many tapestries, so much cloth of gold and scarlet, furred not with common stuff, but with vair or gris or ermine, that there was no maiden in all Dammartin, no servant or burgher or burgher's wife, whose heart was not greatly gladdened to see their town thus bedecked. Beholding such display, they cried one to the other, 'This feast is no trickery; for here men are in much labour and trouble.' Jean's men set themselves to put out all their array in an orchard beside the great tower; there they pitched many pavilions....Thus they laboured all day, and the morrow till tierce; then, when tierce was past, the multitude of guests began to press in from every side. Then might you hear neighing of horses, and see chariots unharnessed, ladies stepping forth, and hosts busy to receive them, and minstrels who flocked to this feast....[Then at last came the King and Queen] and entered into the town, where more than ten thousand of the burgesses' wives and daughters, richly decked, greeted them on their way. There ye might have heard many a trumpet, many a bugle and tabor, and many great Saracen horn, many a zithern and bagpipe. It is no marvel that men paid much heed to these things; this music, these fair hangings and other adornments, these trumpeters that went before and these serving-men that came dancing after; so many instruments sounded before them that the melody echoed throughout the town, from street to street all bestrewn with green herbs.... Thus they came to the castle; then went the ladies to chamber and wardrobe to change their garments, and the knights changed their robes in the open air. A fair dinner was set forth in the pavilions...and, when the cloth had been removed and they had washed their hands, then the minstrels played busily on their viols. At last Jean, who was to be dubbed knight, went to bathe in a little water; with him went his brothers and others who were to be dubbed according to the King's and the Earl's pleasure: four and twenty were they in all.

After that they had washed themselves a little while, they clad themselves in tunics, over which they cast white linen robes. The Earl himself sewed Jean's sleeves¹, and set the mantle on his shoulders; and Blonde busied herself well to clothe his

¹ This was the earliest stage of the fashionable tight sleeve. The next stage, a close row of buttons from elbow to wrist, may be seen in the brass of Robert Braunche at King's Lynn.

brethren. Then, at nightfall, they went to keep their due vigil in holy church, which was decked with many a fair and rich hanging of tapestry. All night long a minstrel played his viol before the new knights, for their pastime. The King, and all others of that fair company who would, laid them down in fair soft beds; and those who would went to watch until daybreak with the others; many a pennyworth of wax was burned that night before them; but the Earl was not with them, nor his daughter. Even unto daybreak, they tarried there with Jean; and Jean gave God many thanks for the honour that He had vouchsafed to him; for, the greater grew his lordship, the more deeply did Jean humble himself. As soon as the night was past, and they saw the first whitening of dawn, then they let sing a mass; after which they laid them down to rest, lest lack of sleep should overcome them. There they slept until the sun rose and brought full daylight in his train; then, without further tarrying, the King arose and all his knights; hastily they rose and went to hear their mass. And Blonde, that fair maiden who gladdened all beholders beyond measure with her sight, had decked herself so fair, and was so radiant in her beauty that, even as the vermillion sun, rising at dawn, chases all shadows from the air, so did this fair and gentle maiden lighten all eyes around her.... All and all, men and women, went that day to the service that was sung in holy church. When the mass had been sung, the King girt Jean with his sword and dubbed him knight, smiting him with accolade on the neck; and thus again, in order, he did to all his brethren.... Then they went back to the pavilions, for they were right hungry for dinner; they washed, they seated themselves, and no man held him a niggard who had made them such a repast. There might you see more courses of flesh than I can number; their multitude is beyond my wit; pork and beef and venison, fish and fowl, all meats in great abundance, and good wine in such plenty as any man might desire.

My lord Jean sat that day by the King's side, and his brethren hard by. With the Queen sat Blonde, fairer than all the world. The serving-men hasted busily to and fro; at each course the trumpets sounded; ladies, who served at that table, were decked in cloth of gold, and went singing before each course as it came in. Everywhere was such merriment that each thought in his own mind how no living man had seen such joy. Yet was all this

a mere nothing [in comparison with that which was to come]. When they had eaten in the hall, there began such melody as no man ever heard; the pavilions rang with their minstrelsy from end to end. When the guests had listened awhile, then began the ladies to carole¹; there was many a rich attire, and many a sweet song; there was many a mazy measure trodden with nimble feet; never was a fairer carole than this; they danced till the bells rang to vespertide. Then they went to hear vespers, and came back to sup; after supper, even unto nightfall, they played again in joy and revel. Then might you have seen waxen torches throughout the pavilions, row upon row; no man who saw them could believe that men weighed wax in the balance; it seemed as though it were of no account; dark as was the night, men saw as clear as daylight. And truly daylight was already nigh before they broke off their caroles; yet at last they parted one from the other; for revel may not endure for ever.

Blonde of Oxford, ed. LE ROUX DE LINCY, Camden Society, 1858. Translated for the present work by G. G. COULTON.

¹ *carole*, a dance in which all sing as they go.

KING HORN

C. H. E. L. I. 287, 303, 304. ‘*Horn* is a viking story plainly adapted to romantic ends. The hero is the youthful son of the King of Suddene who, after the death of his father at the hand of raiding Saracens (vikings), is turned adrift in a rudderless boat. Wind and tide bring the boat with its living freight to the land of Westernesse, where the princess Rymenhild, falling in love with the stranded hero, endeavours, with womanly art, to win his love in return.’ The chamberlain Athelbrus, at the instigation of Rymenhild, begs King Aylmar to make Horn a knight. The extract begins at this point (l. 483). *King Horn* belongs to the earlier half of the thirteenth century. Its chief merit is a simple vigour of style more akin to Old English poetry than to the newer French. ‘*King Horn* is singular in its verse, an example of one stage in the development of modern English metres....It has a strange resemblance...to the accidental riming passages in old English.’ Dialect, South-midland. (MS Gg. 4. 27. 2, Camb. Univ.)

The king sede sone,
 ‘That is wel idone.
 Horn me wel iquemeth,
 God knight him bisemeth.
 He schal have mi dubbing,
 And afterward be mi derling.

iquemeth, *pleases*

And alle his feren twelf
 He schal knighten him self:
 Alle he schal hem knighte
 Bifore me this nighte.'
 Til the light of day sprang
 Ailmar him thughte lang.
 The day bigan to springe,
 Horn com bivore the kinge
 Mid his twelf yfere;
 Sume hi were luthere.
 Horn he dubbede to knighte
 With swerd and spures brighte.
 He sette him on a stede whit:
 Ther nas no knight hym ilik.
 He smot him a litel wight,
 And bed him beon a god knight.

Athulf fel a knes thar
 Bivore the king Aylmar.
 'King,' he sede, 'so kene,
 Grante me a bene.
 Nu is knight Sire Horn
 That in Suddenne was iboren.
 Lord he is of londe
 Over us that bi him stonde.
 Thin armes he hath and scheld,
 To fighte with upon the feld.
 Let him us alle knighte,
 For that is ure righte.'

Aylmar sede sone ywis,
 'Do nu that thi wille is.'
 Horn adun gan lighte,
 And makede hem alle knightes.
 Murie was the feste,
 Al of faire gestes.
 Ac Rymenhild nas noght ther,
 And that hire thughte seve yer.

feren, companions
 yfere, companions
 kene, brave
 ywis, indeed

Ailmar him thughte, *It seemed to Ailmar*
luthere, wicked a litel wight, a little bit
bene, boon Suddenne, Cornwall (?)
hire thughte seve yer, seemed to her seven years

com, came
 a, on
 stonde, stand

After Horn heo sente,
 And he to bure wente.
 Nolde he noght go one,
 Athulf was his mone.
 Rymenhild on flore stod,
 Hornes come hire thughte god,
 And sede: 'Welcome, Sire Horn,
 And Athulf knight the biforn
 Knight, nu is thi time
 For to sitte bi me.
 Do nu that thu er of spake,
 To thi wif thu me take.
 Ef thu art trewe of dedes,
 Do nu ase thu sedes.
 Nu thu hast wille thine,
 Unbind me of my pine.'

King Horn, ed. JOSEPH HALL (1901).

heo, <i>she</i>	bure, <i>bower</i>	one, <i>alone</i>	mone, <i>companion</i>	come, <i>coming</i>
er, <i>before</i>	sedes, <i>saidest</i>	Unbind,	<i>Release</i>	pine, <i>pain</i>

HAVELOK THE DANE

C. H. E. L. I. 277, 287, 288, 303-4. 'Havelok' is a tale of how a Danish prince and an English princess come to their own again. The hero, son of the Danish King Birkabeyn, is handed over by his wicked guardian Godard, to a fisherman Grim, to be drowned. A mystic light, however, reveals Havelok's royal birth to the simple Grim, who saves the situation by crossing to England. They land at Grimsby, a town that still cherishes the name of Havelok and the characters of the tale in its streets and its seal; and the hero, by a happy coincidence, drifts, as a kitchen-boy, into the household of Godrich, guardian of Goldburgh. This guardian, however, is no better than Godard, for he has likewise deprived the daughter of the English Aethelwold of her inheritance. Havelok is a strong, handsome youth, who soon becomes famous for feats of strength; whereupon Godrich, who had promised Aethelwold that he would marry Goldburgh to the "best man" in the country, maliciously keeps his promise by forcing her to marry his "cook's knave". Ultimately all wrongs are righted and the union of Havelok and Goldburgh represents a union of Denmark and England. The poem occurs in a unique manuscript at Oxford and contains 3001 lines. It belongs to the earliest years of the fourteenth century. Its rhyming couplets are sometimes a little rough, but they represent an improvement on *King Horn*. The extract (beginning at l. 945) shows Havelok in his days of hardy servitude. Dialect, North-east midland. (MS Bodl. Laud Misc. 108.)

Of alle men was he mest meke,
 Lauhwinde ay, and blithe of speke;
 Evere he was glad and blithe,
 His sorwe he couthe ful wel mithe.
 It ne was non so litel knave,
 For to leyken, ne for to plawe,
 That he ne wolde with him pleye;
 The children that yeden in the weie
 Of him he deden al her wille,
 And with him leykedene here fille.
 Him loveden alle, stille and bolde,
 Knihtes, children, yunge and olde;
 Alle him loveden that him sowen,
 Bothen heye men and lowe.
 Of him the word ful wide spong,
 Hu he was mikel, hu he was strong,
 Hu fayr man God him havede maked,
 But-on that he was almost naked:
 For he ne havede nouht to shride,
 But a kovel ful unride,
 That was ful and swithe wicke,
 Was it nouht worth a fir-sticke.
 The cok bigan of him to rewe,
 And bouhte him clothes, al span-newe;
 He bouhte him bothe hosen and shon,
 And sone dide him done on.
 Hwan he was clothed, hosed, and shod,
 Was non so fayr under God,
 That evere yete in erthe were,
 Non that evere moder bere;
 It was nevere man that yemedē
 In kineriche, that so wel semede

mest, most Lauhwinde, *Laughing* speke, speech sorwe, sorrow
 couthe, could mithe, *conceal* It ne was, *There was not* litel knave, boy
 leyken, frolic plawe, sport pleye, play yeden, *went* he deden, they
did leykedene here, *frolicked their* sowen, *saw* Hu, *How* mikel, tall
 But-on that, *Except that* shride, *clothe himself* kovel, garment (*cowl*)
 unride, rough ful, foul swithe wicke, very mean rewe, pity
 dide him done on, *made him put them on* It was, *There was* yemedē,
 governed kineriche, kingdom semede, was fit

King or cayser forto be,
 Than he was shrid, so semede he;
 For thanne he weren alle samen
 At Lincolne, at the gamen,
 And the erles men woren alle thore,
 Was Havelok bi the shuldrnen more
 Than the meste that ther kam;
 In armes him no man ne nam
 That he dounے sone ne caste;
 Havelok stod over hem als a mast.
 Als he was heie, als he was long,
 He was bothe stark and strong;
 In Engelond was non hise per
 Of strengthe that evere kam him ner.
 Als he was strong, so was he softe;
 They a man him misdede ofte,
 Nevere more he him misseyde,
 Ne hond on him with yvele leyde.
 Of bodi was he mayden clene;
 Nevere yete in gardine, ne in grene,
 With hore ne wolde he leyke ne lye,
 No more than it were a strie.
 In that time al Engelond
 Therl Godrich havede in his hond,
 And he gart komen into the tun
 Mani erl and mani barun;
 And alle men that lives were
 In Engelond, thanne wer there,
 That they haveden after sent
 To ben ther at the parlement.
 With hem com mani champioun,
 Mani wiht ladde, blac, and brown;
 And fel it so that yunge men,
 Wel abouten nine or ten,

Than, *When shrid, clothed he, they samen, together gamen, games wornen, were thore, there shuldrnen more, shoulders taller nam, took heie, tall stark, sturdy per, peer softe, gentle They, Though misdede, injured misseyde, reproached yvele, evil gardine, garden hore, whore leyke, frolic strie, hag Therl, The earl gart, made lives, alive wiht, white fel, happened*

Bigunnen there for to layke:
 Thider komen bothe stronge and wayke;
 Thider komen lesse and more,
 That in the borw thanne weren thore;
 Chaumpiouns, and starke laddes,
 Bondemen, with here gaddes,
 Als he comen fro the plow;
 There was sembling inow!
 For it ne was non horse-knave,
 Thou thei sholden in honde have,
 That he ne kam thider, the leyk to se:
 Biforn here fet thanne lay a tre,
 And putten with a mikel ston
 The starke laddes, ful god won.
 The ston was mikel, and ek gret.
 And al so hevi so a net;
 Grund-stalwurthe man he sholde be
 That mouhte it liften to his kne;
 Was ther neyther cler, ne prest,
 That mihte it liften to his brest:
 Therwith putten the chaumpiouns
 That thider comen with the barouns.
 Hwo-so mihte putten thore
 Biforn another, an inch or more,
 Wore he yung, or wore he old,
 He was for a kempe told.
 Al-so thei stoden, and ofte stareden,
 The chaumpiouns, and ek the ladden;
 And he maden mikel strout
 Abouten the altherbeste bout,
 Havelok stod, and lokede ther-til;
 And of puttingge he was ful wil,

borw, borough thore, there Bondemen, Husbandmen here gaddes,
 their goads he, they sembling, assembling it, there horse-knave,
 groom Thou thei sholden in honde have, Though they [he] should have work
 in hand leyk, sport here fet, their feet putten, put ful god won,
 full good plenty so a net, as an ox Grund-stalwurthe, Very stalwart
 mouhte, might kempe told, champion reckoned Also, As stareden,
 stared ladden, lads strout, strife altherbeste, best of all
 bout, bout

For nevere yete ne saw he or
 Putten the stone, or thanne thor.
 Hise mayster bad him gon therto,
 Als he couthe ther-with do.
 Tho hise mayster it him bad,
 He was of him ful sore adrad;
 Therto he stirte sone anon,
 And kipte up that hevi ston,
 That he sholde putten withe;
 He putte, at the firste sithe,
 Over alle that ther wore,
 Twelve fote, and sumdel more.
 The chaumpiouns that that put sown,
 Shuldreden he ilc other, and lowen;
 Wolden he no more to putting gange,
 But seyde: 'We dwellen her to longe!'
 This selkouth mihte nouht ben hyd,
 Ful sone it was ful loude kid
 Of Havelok, hu he warp the ston
 Over the laddes everilkon;
 Hu he was fayr, hu he was long,
 Hu he was wiht, hu he was strong;
 Thorhut England yede the speke,
 Hu he was strong, and ek ful meke;
 In the castel, up in the halle,
 The knihtes speken therof alle,
 So that Godrich it herde wel
 Ther spoken of Havelok, everi del,
 Hu he was strong man and hey,
 Hu he was strong, and ek ful sley,
 And thouhte Godrich: 'Thoru this knave
 Shal ich Engelond al have,
 And mi sone after me;
 For so I wile that it be.
 King Athelwald me dide swere
 Upon al the messe-gere

*or, before or thanne thor, before then there stirte, leaped kipte,
 snatched sithe, time sown, saw ilc other, each other lowen, laughed
 selkouth, wonder kid, shown hu, how warp, threw everilkon,
 every one yede, went speke, speech everi del, every time sley,
 skilful me dide swere, made me swear messe-gere, mass-vessels*

That y shulde his douhter yive
 The hexte man that mihte live,
 The beste, the fairest, the strangest ok;
 That gart he me sweren on the bok.
 Hwere mihte I finden ani so hey
 So Havelok is, or so sley?
 Thouh y souhte hethen into Ynde,
 So fayr, so strong, ne mihte y finde.
 Havelok is that ilke knave
 That shal Goldeborw have.'
 This thouhte he with trechery,
 With traysoun, and with felony;
 For he wende that Havelok wore
 Sum cherles sone, and no more;
 Ne shulde he haven of Engellond
 Onlepi forw in his hond
 With hire that was ther-of the eyr,
 That bothe was god and swithe fair.
 He wende that Havelok wer a thral,
 Ther-thoru he wende haven al
 In Engelond, that hire riht was;
 He werse was than Sathanas
 That Jesu Crist in erthe shop;
 Hanged worthe he on an hok!

After Goldeborw sone he sende,
 That was bothe fayr and hende,
 And dide hire to Lincolne bringe;
 Belles dede he ageyn hire ringen,
 And joie he made hire swithe mikel,
 But netheles he was ful swikel.
 He seyde that he sholde hire yeve
 The fayrest man that mihte live.
 She answerede and seyde anon,
 Bi Jesu Crist and bi Seint John,

yive, give hexte, biggest ok, also gart, made hethen, hence
 ilke, very wende, supposed wore, was Onlepi forw, *A single furrow*
 thrall Ther-thoru, *There-through [through this]* shop, shaped
 worthe he, may he be hende, gentle dide, made bringe, be brought
 netheles, nevertheless swikel, wicked

That hire sholde no man wedde,
Ne no man bringen hire to bedde,
But he were king or kinges eyr,
Were he nevere man so fayr.

Godrich the erl was swithe wroth
That she swor ther swilk an oth,
And seyde: ‘Hwether thou wilt be
Quen and levedi over me?
Thou shalt haven a gadeling,
Ne shalt thou haven non other king;
The shal spusen mi cokes knave,
Shalt thou non other loverd have.
Da-theit that the other yeve
Evere-more hwil I live!
To-morwe sholen ye ben weddet,
And, maugre thin, to-gidere beddet.’
Goldeborw gret, and was hire ille;
She wolde ben ded, bi hire wille....
On the niht, as Goldeborw lay,
Sory and sorwful was she ay,
For she wende she were bi-swike,
That she were yeven unkyndelike.
O niht saw she therinne a liht,
A swithe fayr, a swithe bryht,
Al so briht, al so shir
So it were a blase of fir.
She lokede north, and ek south,
And saw it comen ut of his mouth,
That lay bi hire in the bed:
No ferlike thouh she were adred!
Thouhte she: ‘Hwat may this bimene!
He beth heyman yet, als y wene;
He beth heyman er he be ded.’
On hise shuldre, of gold red

But, Unless swilk, such levedi, lady gadeling, vagabond
spusen, wed loverd, lord Da-theit that the other yeve, Cursed whoso
gives thee another sholen, shall maugre thin, in spite of thee gret, wept
wende, supposed biswike, betrayed yeven unkyndelike, given unbefittingly
O niht, In the night swithe, very shir, shining So, As if
ferlike, wonder bimene, signify beth heyman, is nobleman als, also
wene, think

She saw a swithe noble croiz,
 Of an angel she herde a voz:
 'Goldeborw, lat thi sorwe be,
 For Havelok, that haveth spuset the,
 Is kinges sone and kinges eyr;
 That bikenneth that croiz so fayr.
 It bikenneth more, that he shal
 Denemark haven, and Englond al;
 He shal ben king, strong and stark,
 Of Engelond and Denemark;
 That shalt thou with thin eyne sen,
 And thou shalt quen and levedi ben.'

Thanne she havede herd the stevene
 Of the angel ut of hevene,
 She was so fele sithes blithe
 That she ne mihte hire ioie mythe;
 But Havelok sone anon she kiste;
 And he sleep, and nouht ne wiste
 Hwat that aungel havede seyd.

The Lay of Havelok the Dane, ed.
 W. W. SKEAT and K. SISAM (1915).

lat thi sorwe be,	leave thy sorrow	spuset the,	wedded thee	eyr, heir
bikenneth,	betokens	levedi,	lady	Thanne, When
sithes, so many times		mythe,	conceal	stevene, voice

AMIS AND AMILOUN

C. H. E. L. I. 314-315. *Amis and Amiloun* is a story of sublime friendship. The two knights are foster-brothers, alike in nature and appearance, and their love passes the love of women. Amiloun generously, but surreptitiously, takes the place of Amis in a trial by combat that involves the honour of his friend, and for this sin against a sacred ordinance is stricken with leprosy. Long after Amis finds him, an outcast and a beggar, suffering for his friend's fault. To the repentant Amis an angel reveals that the blood of his two children alone can make whole the wretched Amiloun, and he calmly resolves to make the sacrifice. The romance, which is one of the finest of them all, belongs to the last years of the thirteenth century. The extract given begins at l. 2233. Morris's prose version of the French story is familiar.

Than thought the douk, with outen lesing,
 For to slen his childer so ying,

It were a dedli sinne;

And than thought he, bi heven king,

douk, duke lesing, deception slen, slay ying, young

His brother out of sorwe bring,
 For that nold he nought blinne.
 So it bifel on Cristes night,
 Swiche time as Jesu, ful of might,
 Was born to save man kunne,
 To chirche to wende, al that ther wes,
 Thai dighten hem, withouten les,
 With joie and worldes winne.

Than thai were redi for to fare,
 The douke bad al that ther ware,
 To chirche thai schuld wende,
 Litel and michel, lasse and mare,
 That non bileft in chaumber are,
 As thai wald ben his frende;
 And seyd he wald him selve that night
 Kepe his brother, that gentil knight,
 That was so god and kende.
 Than was ther non that durst say nay,
 To chirche thai went in her way,
 At hom bileft the hende....

Alon him self, with outen mo,
 Into the chaumber he gan to go,
 Ther that his childer were,
 And biheld hem bothe to,
 Hou fair thai lay to gider tho,
 And slepe bothe yfere;
 Than seyd him selve: ‘Bi seyn Jon,
 It were gret rewethe you to slon,
 That God hath bought so dere!’
 His kniif he had drawen that tide;
 For sorwe he sleynt oway biside,
 And wepe with reweful chere....

[He slays his children as the angel bade him.]

And when he was out of chaumber gon,
 The dore he steked stille anon

*blinne, cease ther wes, were there dighten, dressed withouten
 les, to say truth winne, delight Than, When non bileft, none left
 wald ben, should be Kepe, Guard hende, noble one mo, more
 yfere, together rewethe, ruih tide, time sleynt, slunk steked, fastened*

As fast as it was biforn;
 The kays he hidde under a ston,
 And thought thai schuld wene ichon
 That thai hadde ben forlorn.
 To his brother he went him than,
 And seyd to that careful man,
 Swiche time as God was born:
 ‘Ich have the brought mi childer blod,
 Ich hope it schal do the gode,
 As the angel seyd biforn.’

‘Brother,’ sir Amiloun gan to say,
 ‘Hastow slayn thine children tuay?
 Allas, whi dedestow so?’
 He wepe and seyd: ‘Waileway!
 Ich had lever til domesday
 Have lived in care and wo!’
 Than seyd sir Amis: ‘Be now stille!
 Jesu, when it is his wille,
 May sende me childer mo.
 For me of blis thou art al bare;
 Ywis, mi liif wil y nought spare
 To help the now ther fro.’

He tok that blode, that was so bright,
 And alied that gentil knight,
 That er was hende in hale,
 And seththen in a bed him dight,
 And wreighe him wel warm, aplight,
 With clothes riche and fale.
 ‘Brother,’ he seyd, ‘ly now stille,
 And falle on slepe thurch Godes wille,
 As the angel told in tale;
 And ich hope wele, withouten lesing,
 Jesu, that is heven king,
 Schal bote the of thi bale.’...

wene, think	forlorn, lost	careful, woeful	dedestow, didst thou
lever, rather	For me, Through me	ther fro, therefrom	aled, anointed
er, formerly	hende, courteous	hale, hall	seththen, afterwards
wreighe, covered	aplight, in truth	fale, many	bote, cure
bale, suffering			

A morwe, as tite as it was day,
 The levedi com hom al with play,
 With knightes ten and five;
 Thai sought the kays ther thai lay;
 Thai founde hem nought, thai were oway,
 Wel wo was hem o live.
 The douk bad al that ther wes
 Thai schuld hold hem stille in pes,
 And stint of her strive;
 And seyd, he hadde the keys nome;
 Schuld no man in the chaumber come
 Bot him self and his wife.
 Anon he tok his levedi than
 And seyd to hir: ‘Leve leman,
 Be blithe and glad of mode;
 For bi him that this warld wan,
 Bothe mi childer ich have slan,
 That were so hende and gode;
 For me thought in mi sweven
 That an angel com fram heven,
 And seyd me, thurch her blode
 Mi brother schuld passe out of his wo;
 Therfore y slough hem bothe to,
 To hele that frely fode.’
 Than was the levedi ferly wo,
 And seighe, hir lord was al so;
 Sche comfort him ful yare.
 ‘O lef liif,’ sche seyd tho,
 ‘God may sende ous childer mo,
 Of hem have thou no care;
 Yif it ware at min hert rote,
 For to bring thi brother bote
 My lyf y wold not spare.
 For no man shal oure children see,
 To-morow shal they beryed be
 Right as they faire ded ware.’

tite, soon play, mirth ther, where o live, in life pes, peace stint, cease
 strive, strife nome, taken wan, won hende, gentle sweven, dream
 freely fode, noble man ferly wo, exceeding sorrowful seighe, saw
 yare, readily lef, dear rote, root bote, remedy faire, naturally

Al thus the lady faire and bryght
 Comfort hur lord with al hur myght,
 As ye mow understande;
 And seth they went both ful ryght
 To Sir Amylion, that gentyl knyght,
 That ere was free to fonde.
 And whan Sir Amylion wakyd thoo,
 Al his fowlehed was agoo,
 Thurch grace of Goddes sonde;
 And than was he as feire a man
 As ever he was yet or than,
 Seth he was born in londe.

Than were they al blith:
 Her joy couth no man kyth,
 And thonked God that day.
 And than, as ye mow listen and lyth,
 To a chamber they went swyth,
 There the children lay;
 And, without wemme and wound,
 Al hool and sound the children found,
 And layen to geder and play.
 For joye they wept there they stood,
 And thonked God with myld mood;
 Her care was al away....

text of EUGEN KÖLBING (Heilbronn, 1884);
 see also WEBER's *Metrical Romances* (1810).

seth, afterward free to fonde, noble in trial fowlehed, foulness sonde, messenger kyth, declare lyth, hear swyth, quickly wemme, blemish hool, whole

KYNG ALISAUNDER

C. H. E. L. i. 306-307. *Kyng Alisaunder* illustrates the medieval view of classical antiquity. Greek warfare, customs and religion appear in the garb of the Middle Ages, decked with fancies drawn from fairyland and magic story. The poem contains nearly eight thousand lines. It belongs to the end of the thirteenth century. The quotation (beginning at l. 6658) describes adventures of Alexander on his Indian campaign.

Heo passeden by a quenes lond,
 That hette Candace, y undurstoned.
 Of the world scheo was richest;
 Of alle wymmen scheo was fairest.
 Heo lovede Alisaundre previliche;
 And he hire sikirliche;
 Ac non of heom no hadde other y-seygue,
 In halle, in bour, no in weye.
 In this vyage he hadde y-ment,
 He wolde to hire have y-went;
 Ac he lette, for suspecioune;
 And yet more for treson.
 Ac forth he wente y undurstonde,
 And passed the qwenes londe.
 Tho the qwene undurstod,
 For ferd of love heo was nygh wod:
 Heo greithed noble messangers,
 And sette heom on noble justers,
 And tok heom a lettre, and bad heom beore
 To Alisaundre and brynge onswere.
 Theo messangers to the kyng went,
 And broughten theo lettred that scheo sent.
 They weore swithe welcome;
 The kyng hath the lettres y-nome,
 And brak the sel, the lettres say:
 This was the tenour, *per ma fay*.
 "To Alisaundre, the emperour,
 Of alle kayseris pris, kyng, and flour,

Heo passeden, *They passed* previliche, secretly sikirliche, surely non of heom no hadde other y-seygue, neither had seen the other ferd, force wod, mad justers, steeds swithe, very y-nome, taken pris, prize

The quene Candace, with alle honour,
 Sendith the gretyng *per amour*.
 O Alisaundre! dure sire,
 Over alle men y the desyre!
 Tak me, to-fore alle, to thy qwene;
 Riche schal thy mede beone!
 Y wol charge, saun faile,
 With besauns, a thousand camailes;
 Y wol geve the gymmes, and byghes,
 Ten thousand caries.
 Y wol chargen al the bestis
 With pellis, and siglatouns honeste.
 Y wol the geve gentil men,
 Ten thousand wyghte Ethiopen;
 Yonge knyghtis, flumbardynges,
 Wyghte in every batalynges:
 And an c. thousand noble knyghtis,
 To thy servyse gode and wyghte:
 And of gold a coroune bryght,
 Ful preciouuse stones y-pyght;
 Gold no seolver, so y sigge,
 No myghte the stones to worth bigge.
 Yet thou schalt have six hundred rinoceros;
 And v. c. olifauns, and vij. c. perdos;
 And two hundred unycornes;
 And fuf M. boles with on hornes;
 And four hundred lyouns whyte;
 And a thousand, that wel can byte
 Olifauntz, and lyouns on playne,
 Stronge houndis of Albayne;
 And fyf hundred ceptres of gold;
 And my lond to thy wold:
 And an c. thousand gentil sqwyers,
 That konne the serve in eche mæsters:
 And thrytty thousand maidenes bryght
 For to serve thyne knyghtis:

dure, cruel besauns, bezants byghes, rings caries, carats pellis,
 furs siglatouns, rich stuff's flumbardynges, flaming (with courage)
 sigge, say bigge, buy perdos, leopards boles, bulls mæsters, mystery
 [craft, trade]

Alle eorlis, duykes, and barouns,
 Ful of cortesy wones:
 O Alisaundre, riche kyng,
 Beo my lord and my derlyng!
 Y wol the serve to hond and fot,
 By nyght and day, yef y mot!

text of WEBER: *Metrical Romances* (1810).

SIR ORFEO

C. H. E. L. I. 294-295, 299, 300, 310-311. ““Breton lays”...meant for the English a short story in rime, like those of Marie de France, taken from Celtic sources...the best of them are very good in the way they manage their plot. Moreover, there is something in them of that romantic mystery which is less common in medieval literature than modern readers generally suppose.... The Breton lays are nearer than other romances to the popular beliefs out of which romantic marvels are drawn, and they retain something of their freshness. The best in English are *Sir Orfeo* and *Sir Launfal*. The first of these, which is the story of Orpheus, is a proof of what can be done by mere form; the classical fable is completely taken over, and turned into a fairy tale....Pluto has become the fairy king, and everything ends happily.’ The poem contains 510 lines and belongs to the first quarter of the fourteenth century. The dialect is south-east midland. The references to minstrels and minstrelsy are specially interesting. (Auchinleck MS and Harl. 3810

We redyn ofte and fynde ywryte,
 As clerkes don us to wyte,
 The layes that ben of harpyng
 Ben yfounde of frely thing.
 Sum ben of wele and sum of wo,
 And sum of joy and merthe also;
 Sum of trechery and sum of gyle,
 And sum of happenes that fallen by whyle;
 Sum of bourdys, and sum of rybaudry,
 And sum ther ben of the feyre.
 Off alle thing that men may se,
 Moost to lowe forsothe they be.
 In Brytaine this layes arne ywryte,
 Furst yfounde and forthe ygete,
 Of aventures that fillen by dayes,
 Wheroft Brytoun made her layes.

redyn, read ywryte, written don us to wyte, make us know yfounde, composed frely thing, noble matter bourdys, jests feyre, magic Moost to lowe, Most praiseworthy this, these arne, are fillen by dayes, befell formerly

When they myght owher heryn
 Of aventures that ther weryn,
 They toke her haryps with game,
 Maden layes, and yaf it name.
 Of aventures that han befall
 Y can sum telle, but nought alle.
 Herken, lordyngs that ben trewe,
 And y wol you telle of sir Orphewe.
 Orfeo was a king,
 In his time an heighe lording,
 A stalworth man and hardi bo,
 Large, curteys he was also.
 His fader was comen of king Pluto,
 And his moder of king Juno,
 That sum time were as godes yhold,
 For aventours that thai dede and told.
 Orpheo most of ony thing
 Lovede the gle of harpyng;
 Syker was every gode harpour
 Of hym to have moche honour.
 Hymself loved for to harpe,
 And layde thereon his wittes scharpe
 He lernyd so, ther nothing was
 A better harper in no plas.
 In the world was never man born
 That ever Orpheo sat biforn,
 And he myght of his harpyng her,
 He schulde thinke that he wer
 In one of the joys of Paradys,
 Suche joy and melody in his harpyng is....
 Bifel so in the comessing of May,
 When miri and hot is the day,
 And oway beth winter schours,
 And everi feld is ful of flours,
 And blosme breme on everi bough
 Overal wexeth miri anough,

<i>owher, anywhere</i>	<i>game, delight</i>	<i>it, them</i>	<i>bo, both</i>
<i>Large, Generous</i>	<i>Syker, Sure</i>	<i>layde thereon, gave thereto</i>	<i>wittes</i>
<i>scharpe, keen mind</i>	<i>And, If</i>	<i>comessing, beginning</i>	<i>breme, bright</i>
<i>Overal wexeth, Everywhere grow</i>		<i>anough, enough</i>	

This ich quen, dame Heurodis,
 Tok to maidens of priis,
 And went in an undrentide
 To play bi an orchard-side,
 To se the floures sprede and spring,
 And to here the foules sing.
 Thai sett hem doun al thre
 Under a fair ympe tre,
 And wel sone this fair quene
 Fel on slepe opon the grene.
 The maidens durst hir nought awake,
 Bot lete hir ligge and rest take.
 So sche slepe til afternone,
 That undertide was al ydone....

[The queen awakes in mad terror and begins to rend her garments and tear at her face, so that she has to be borne by force back to the castle.]

When Orfeo herd that tiding,
 Never him nas wers for nothing.
 He come up with knightes tene
 To chaumber right bifor the quene,
 And biheld and seyd with grete pite:
 'O lef liif, what is te?
 That ever yete hast ben so stille,
 And now gredest wonder schille!
 Thi bodi, that was so white ycore,
 With thine nailes is al totore.
 Alas thi rode, that was so red,
 Is as wan as thou were ded!
 And also thine fingres smale
 Beth al blodi and al pale!
 Allas! thi lovesum eyghen to
 Loketh so man doth on his fo!
 A, dame, ich biseche merci!
 Lete ben al this reweful cri,
 And tel me what the is and hou,
 And what thing may the help now.'

ich, same	undrentide, morning	ympe tre, grafted tree	ligge, lie
nas, it was not	gredest, cryest	schille, shrill	ycore, choicely
totore, torn	rode, countenance	Lete ben,	the is, ails thee

Tho lay sche stille atte last,
 And gan to wepe swithe fast,
 And seyd thus the king to:
 'Allas, mi lord, sir Orfeo!
 Seththen we first togider were,
 Ones wroth never we nere;
 Bot ever ich have yloved the
 As mi liif, and so thou me.
 Ac now we mot delen ato,
 Do thi best, for y mot go.'
 'Allas,' quath he, 'forlorn ich am!
 Whider wiltow go, and to wham?
 Whider thou gost, ichil with the,
 And whider y go, thou schalt with me.'
 'Nay, nay, sir, that nought nis;
 Ichil the telle al hou it is:
 As ich lay this undertide,
 And slepe under our orchard-side,
 Ther come to me to fair knighting,
 Wele y-armed al to rightes,
 And bad me comen on heighing,
 And speke with her lord the king.
 And ich answerd at wordes bold,
 Y durst nought, no y nold.
 Thai priked ogain, as thai might drive;
 Tho kom her king al so blive,
 With an hundred knighting and mo,
 And damisels an hundred also;
 Al on snowe-white stedes,
 As white as milke were her wedes.
 Y no seighe never yete bifore
 So fair creatours ycore.
 The king hadde a croun on hed;
 It nas of silver, no of gold red,
 Ac it was of a precious ston,
 As bright as the sonne it schon.

Ones wroth, *Once angry* delen ato, *part a-two* mot, *must*
 Ichil, *I will* on heighing, *in haste* priked, *rode hard* blive, *very quickly*
 wedes, *garments* ycore, *chosen out*

And as son as he to me cam,
 Wold ich, nold ich, he me nam,
 And made me with him ride
 Opon a palfray bi his side,
 And brought me to his palays,
 Wele atird in ich ways,
 And schewed me castels and tours,
 Rivers, forestes, frith with flours,
 And his riche stedes ichon;
 And seththen me brought ogain hom
 Into our owhen orchard,
 And said to me thus afterward:
 "Loke, dame, to-morwe thatow be
 Right here under this ympe tre,
 And than thou schalt with ous go,
 And live with ous evermo;
 And yif thou makest ous ylet,
 Whar thou be, thou worst yfet."...
 ...

[The queen is mysteriously carried away, and the king for sorrow gives up the kingdom to his steward, and wanders forth with his harp alone.]

Oway, what ther was wepe and wo,
 When he, that hadde ben king with croun,
 Went so poverlich out of toun!
 Thurch wode and over heth
 Into the wildernes he geth.
 Nothing he fint that him is ays,
 Bot ever he liveth in gret malais.
 He, that hadde ywerd the fowe and griis,
 And on bed the purper biis,
 Now on hard hethe he lith,
 With leves and gresse he him writh.
 He, that hadde had castels and tours,
 River, forest, frith with flours,
 Now, thei it comenci to snewe and frese,
 This king mote make his bed in mese.

Wold ich, nold ich, *Willy nilly* nam, took frith, glade stedes
 ichon, places each one seththen, afterwards owhen, own thatow,
 that thou ylet, delay worst yfet, shalt be fetched ays, ease ywerd, worn
 fowe, fur griis, gray biis, linen writh, covers thei, though
 mese, moss

He that had yhad knightes of priis
 Bifor him kneland, and levedis,
 Now seth he nothing that him liketh,
 Bot wilde wormes bi him striketh.
 He that had yhad plente
 Of mete and drink, of ich deyne,
 Now may he al day digge and wrote,
 Er he finde his fille of rote.
 In somer he liveth bi wild frut
 And berien bot gode lut;
 In winter may he nothing finde
 Bot rote, grases, and the rinde.
 Al his bodi was oway dwine
 For missays, and al tochine.
 Lord! who may telle the sore
 This king sufferd ten yere and more!
 His here of his berd, blac and rowe,
 To his girdel-stede was growe;
 His harp, whereon was al his gle,
 He hidde in an holwe tre;
 And, when the weder was clere and bright,
 He toke his harp to him wel right,
 And harped at his owhen wille;
 Into alle the wode the soun gan schille,
 That alle the wilde bestes that ther beth
 For joie abouten him thai teth,
 And alle the foules that ther were
 Come and sete on ich a brere,
 To here his harping afin,
 So miche melody was therin;
 And when he his harping lete wold,
 No best bi him abide nold.
 He might se him bisides
 Oft in hot undertides
 The king o fairi with his rout
 Com to hunt him al about,

striketh, crawl wrote, grub berien, berries gode lut, little good
 rinde, bark dwine, dwindled missays, discomfort tochine, chapped
 sore, pain rowe, rough schille, shrill teth, draw brere, briar
 afin, perfectly lete, stop

With dun, with cri and bloweing,
 And houndes also with him berking;
 Ac no best thai no nome,
 No never he nist whider thai bicome.
 And other while he might him se
 As a gret ost bi him te,
 Wele atourned ten hundred knightes,
 Ich y-armed to his rightes,
 Of contenaunce stout and fers,
 With mani desplaid baners,
 And ich his swerd ydrawe hold,
 Ac never he nist whider thai wold.
 And other while he seighe other thing:
 Knightes and levedis com daunceing,
 In queynt atire gisely,
 With queynte pas and softly;
 Tabours and trumpes yede hem bi,
 And al maner menstraci.
 And on a day he seighe him biside
 Sexti levedis on hors ride,
 Gentil and jolif as brid on ris,
 Nought o man amonges hem ther nis.
 And ich a faucoun on hond bere,
 And rideon haukin bi o rivere.
 Of game thai founde wel gode haunt:
 Maulardes, hayroun, and cormeraunt.
 The foules of the water ariseth,
 The faucouns hem wele deviseth:
 Ich faucoun his pray slough.
 That seighe Orfeo, and lough.
 'Parfay,' quath he, 'ther is fair game,
 Thider ichil, bi Godes name;
 Ich was ywon swiche werk to se.'
 He aros, and thider gan te.
 To a levedi he was ycome,
 Biheld and hath wele undername

dun, *din* bloweing, *horn-blowing* Ac, *But* best, *beast* nome, *take*
nist, knew not te, *come* atourned, *appointed* to his rightes, *properly*
gisely, handsomely brid on ris, *bird on spray* Maulardes, *Wild ducks*
lough, laughed ywon, *wont* undername, *perceived*

And seth bi al thing that it is
 His owhen quen, dam Heurodis.
 Yern he biheld hir, and sche him eke,
 Ac noither to other a word no speke.
 For messais that sche on him seighe,
 That had ben so riche and so heighe,
 The teres fel out of her eigne.
 The other levedis this yseighe,
 And maked hir oway to ride;
 Sche most with him no lenger abide....
 In at a roche the levedis rideith,
 And he after, and nought abideth.
 When he was in the roche ygo,
 Wele thre mile other mo,
 He com into a fair cuntry,
 As bright so sonne on somers day,
 Smothe and plain and al grene,
 Hille no dale was ther non ysene.
 Amidde the lond a castel he seighe,
 Riche and real and wonder heighe.
 Al the utmast wal
 Was clere and schine as cristal.
 An hundred tours ther were about,
 Degiselich and bataild stout;
 The butras com out of the diche,
 Of rede gold y-arched riche;
 The vousour was anourned al
 Of ich maner divers animal;
 Within ther wer wide wones,
 Al of precious stones.
 The werst piler on to biholde
 Was al of burnist gold.
 Al that lond was ever light,
 For when it schuld be therk and night,
 The riche stones light gonne,
 As bright as doth at none the sonne.

Yern, *Eagerly* other mo, *or more* real, *royal* utmast, *outermost*
 schine, *bright* Degiselich, *Highly ornamented* diche, *moat*
 vousour (*Fr. voussure*), *vaulting* anourned, *adorned* wones, *dwelling-places*
 therk, *dark* light gonne, *began to shine*

No man may telle, no thenche in thought,
 The riche werk that ther was wrought.
 Bi al thing him think that it is
 The proude court of Paradis.
 In this castel the levedis alight; .
 He wold in after, yif he might:
 Orfeo knokketh atte gate,
 The porter was redi therate,
 And asked, what he wold have ydo:
 'Parfay,' quath he, 'ich am a minstrel, lo!
 To solas thi lord with mi gle,
 Yif his suete wille be.'
 The porter undede the yate anon,
 And lete him into the castel gon.
 Than he gan bihold about al,
 And seighe ful liggeand within the wal
 Of folk that were thider ybrought,
 And thought dede, and nere nought:
 Sum stode withouten hade,
 And sum non armes nade,
 And sum thurch the bodi hadde wounde,
 And sum lay wode, ybounde,
 And sum armed, on hors sete,
 And sum astrangled as thai ete,
 And sum were in water adreynt,
 And sum with fire al forschreynt.
 Wives ther lay on child-bedde,
 Sum ded, and sum awedde;
 And wonder fele ther lay bisides,
 Right as thai slepe her undertides.
 Eche was thus in this warld ynome,
 With fairi thider ycome.
 Ther he seighe his owthen wiif,
 Dame Heurodis, his lef liif,
 Slepe under an ympe tre:
 Bi her clothes he knewe that it was he.

ful liggeand, many lying hade, head nade, had not wode, mad
 adreynt, drowned forschreynt, parched awedde, beside themselves
 her, their fairi, enchantment

And when he hadde bihold this mervails alle,
 He went into the kinges halle.
 Than seighe he ther a semly sight,
 A tabernacle blisselful and bright,
 Therin her maister king sete,
 And her quen fair and swete.
 Her crounes, her clothes schine so bright,
 That unnethe bihold he hem might....

[He plays before the king who in delight offers him any gift he asks. Orfeo demands the lady, and, after some demur, the boon is granted.

Orfeo returns home in disguise to see if his steward is loyal, and finds him true and the people sad for their king. The steward recognises the sound of his master's harp, and Orfeo then declares himself.]

Glad thai were of his live.
 To chaumber thai ladde him also blive,
 And bathed him and schaved his berd,
 And tired him as a king apert;
 And seththen with gret processiou
 Thai brought the quen into that toun,
 With al maner menstraci.
 Lord, ther was grete melody!
 For joie thai wepe with her eighe,
 That hem so sounde ycomen seighe.
 Now king Orfeo newe coround is,
 And his quen dame Heurodis,
 And lived long afterward,
 And seththen was king the steward.
 Harpours in Bretaine afterthan
 Herd hou this mervaile bigan,
 And made a lay of gode likeing,
 And nempned it after the king;
 That lay *Orfeo* is yhote,
 Gode is the lay, swete is the note.
 Thus com Sir Orfeo out of his care;
 God graunt ous alle wele to fare.

text of O. ZIELKE (Breslau, 1880, revised).

unnethe, scarcely blive, as soon as possible tired, dressed apert, manifest
 sounde, sound [well] nempned, named yhote, called

SIR BEVES OF HAMTOUN

C. H. E. L. I. 292-293, 305. 'Sir Beves' is the best example of the ordinary popular tale, the medieval book of chivalry with all the right things in it.... The hero's father is murdered, like Hamlet's; the hero is disinherited, like Horn; he is wooed by a fair Paynim princess; he carries a treacherous letter, like Hamlet again, "and beareth with him his own death"; he is separated from his wife and children, like Sir Eustace or Sir Isumbras; and exiled, like Huon of Bordeaux, for causing the death of the king's son. The horse Arundel is like Bayard in *The Four Sons of Aymon*, and the giant Ascrapart is won over like Ferumbras. In the French original there was one conspicuous defect—no dragon. But the dragon is supplied, most liberally, and with great success, in the English version.' *Sir Beves* was very popular and there are several MSS. The version used below is the oldest (Auchinleck MS). It belongs to the first quarter of the fourteenth century. The poem begins with stanzas in *rime couée*, but continues in couplets after line 474 to its remote end four thousand lines away. The dialect is midland—but whether of the northern or southern variety is doubtful. The opening stanza may be quoted to enable the reader to judge whether the couplet is an improvement:

Lordinges, herkneþ to me tale!
Is merier þan þe nïtingale,
þat y schel singe;
Of a kniȝt ich wile ȝow roune,
Beves a hiȝte of Hamtoune,
Wij outer lesing.

The following passage begins at l. 1973. Beves has escaped from a specially noisome dungeon infested with dragons and adders, one of which has scarred his eyebrow. He decides to travel to Ermonie to find his fair Paynim lover Josian.

Erliche amorwe, whan it was dai,
Forth a wente in is wai;
And also a rod him self alone:
'Lord,' a thoughte, 'whar mai i gone?
Whar ich in to Ingelonde fare?
Nai,' a thoughte, 'what scholde i thare,
Boute yif ichadde ost to gader,
For to sle me stifader?'
He thoughte, that he wolde an hie
In to the londe of Ermonie,
To Ermonie, that was is bane,
To his leman Iosiane.

Erliche amorwe, *Early on the morrow* a, he also, as whar, whether
Boute, *Unless* ost, a host stifader, stepfather hie, go

And also a wente theder right,
 A mette with a gentil knight,
 That in the londe of Ermonie
 Hadde bore him gode companie;
 Thai kiste hem anon with that
 And ather askede of otheres stat.
 Thanne seide Beves and lough:
 ‘Ich ave fare hard inough,
 Sofred bothe honger & chele
 And other peines mani & fele
 Thourgh king Ermines gile:
 Yet ich thenke to yelde is while,
 For he me sente to Brademond,
 To have slawe me that stonde:
 God be thanked, a dede nought so,
 Ac in is prisoun with meche wo
 Ichave leie this seven yare,
 Ac now icham from him ifare
 Thourgh godes grace & min engyn,
 Ac al ich wite it king Ermyn,
 And, ne wer is daughter Iosiane,
 Sertes, ich wolde ben is bane!’
 ‘Iosiane,’ queth the knight, ‘is a wif
 Ayen hire wille with meche strif.
 Seve yer hit is gon and more,
 That the riche king Yvore
 To Mombraunt hath hire wedde
 Bothe to bord and to bedde,
 And hath the swerd Morgelai
 And Arondel, the gode palfrai:
 Ac sithe the time, that i was bore,
 Swiche game hadde ich never be-fore,
 Ase ich hadde that ilche tide,
 Whan i seh king Yvor ride
 To-ward Mombraunt on Arondel;
 The hors was nought ipaied wel:

also a, as he lough, laughed chele, cold mani, numerous Thourgh,
Through engyn, ingenuity wite, blame ben is bane, be his bane
 ilche tide, every time seh, saw ipaied, satisfied

He arnedē awai with the king
 Thourgh felde & wode, with outer lesing,
 And in a mure don him cast,
 Almest he hadde deied in hast.
 Ac er hii wonne the stede,
 Ropes in the contre thai leide;
 Ac never sithe, with oute fable,
 Ne com the stede out of the stable,
 So sore he was aneied that tide;
 Siththe dorste noman on him ride!
 For this tiding Beves was blithe,
 His ioie kouthe he noman kithe.
 'Wer Iosiane,' a thoughte, 'ase lele,
 Alse is me stede Arondel,
 Yet scholde ich come out of wo!'
 And at the knight he askede tho:
 'Whider-wardes is Mombraunt?'
 'Sere,' a sede, 'be Tervagaunt,
 Thow might nought thus wende forth,
 Thow most terne al ayen north!'

Beves ternede his stede
 And rod north gode spedē;
 Ever a was pasaunt,
 Til a com to Mombraunt.
 Mombraunt is a riche cite,
 In al the londe of Sarsine
 Nis ther non ther to iliche
 Ne be fele parti so riche.
 And whan that hende knight Bevoun
 Come with outer the toun,
 Thar with a palmer he mette,
 And swithe faire he him grette:
 'Palmer,' a sede, 'whar is the king?'
 'Sire!' a seide, 'an honting
 With kings fiftene.'
 'And whar,' a seide, 'is the quene?'
 'Sire,' a seide, 'in hire bour.'
 'Palmer,' a seide, 'paramour,

*arnede, ran
then durst Ac er hii, But ere they sithe, since Siththe dorste, Since
kithe, show ase lele, as loyal swithe, quickly*

Yem me thine wede
 For min and for me stede!
 'God yeve it,' queth the palmare,
 'We hadde drive that chefare!'

Beves of is palfrei alighte
 And schrede the palmer as a knighth
 And yaf him is hors, that he rod in,
 For is bordon and is sklavin.

The palmer rod forth ase a king,
 & Beves wente also a bretheling.
 Whan he com to the castel gate,
 Anon he fond thar ate
 Mani palmer thar stonde
 Of fele kene londe,

And he askede hem in that stede,
 What hii alle thar dede.

Thanne seide on, that thar stod:
 'We beth icome to have gode,
 And so thow ert also!'

'Who,' queth Beves, 'schel it us do?'
 'The quene, god hire schilde fro care!
 Meche she loveth palmare;
 Al that she mai finden here,
 Everiche dai in the yere,
 Faire she wile hem fede
 And yeve hem riche wede
 For a knightes love, Bevoun,
 That was i-boren at Southhamtoun;
 To a riche man she wolde him bringe,
 That kouthe telle of him tiding!'
 'Whanne,' queth Beves, 'schel this be don?'

A seide: 'Be-twene middai & noun.'

Beves, hit ful wel he sai,
 Hit nas boute yong dai;
 A thoughte, that he wolde er than
 Wende abouthe the barbican,
 For to loke & for to se,
 How it mighte best be,

*Yem, Give
sklavin, cloak*

wede, garments schrede, clothed bordon, staff
 bretheling, wanderer fele kene, many kinds of

Yif he the castel wolde breke,
 Whar a mighty best in reke;
 And also a com be a touret,
 That was in the castel iset,
 A herde wepe and crie;
 Thederward he gan him hie.
 'O allas,' she seide, 'Bevoun,
 Hende knight of South-hamtoun,
 Now ichave bide that day,
 That to the treste i ne may:
 That ilche god, that thou of speke,
 He is fals & thou ert eke!'
 In al the sevene yer eche dai
 Iosiane, that faire mai,
 Was woned swich del to make,
 Al for sire Beves sake.

The levedi gan to the gate te,
 The palmeres thar to se;
 And Beves, after anon
 To the gate he gan gon.
 The palmers gonne al in threste,
 Beves abod & was the laste;
 And whan the maide seh him thar,
 Of Beves she nas nothing war;
 'The semest,' queth she, 'man of anour,
 Thow schelt this dai be priour
 And be-ginne oure deis:
 The semest hende and corteis.'
 Mete and drinke thai hadde afyn,
 Bothe piment and plente a wyn,
 Swithe wel thai hadde ifare;
 Thanne seide the quene to eche palmare:
 'Herde ever eni of yow telle
 In eni lede or eni spelle,
 Or in feld other in toun,
 Of a knight, Beves of Hamtoun?'

breke, enter (breach)	reke, go	treste, trust	ilche, same
te, go in threste, in a crowd	nothing war, not aware	anour, honour	
deis, dais [table]	piment, spiced wine	lede, nation	spelle, tale

'Nai!' queth al, that thar ware.
 'What thou?' she seide, 'niwe palmare?'
 Thanne seide Beves and lough:
 'That knight ich knowe wel inough!
 Atom,' a seide, 'in is contre
 Icham an erl and also is he;
 At Rome he made me a spel
 Of an hors, men clepede Arondel:
 Wide whar ichave iwent
 And me warisoun isspent,
 I sought hit bothe fer & ner,
 Men telleth me, that it is her;
 Yif ever lovedestow wel that knight,
 Let me of that hors have a sight!'

What helpeth hit, to make fable?
 She ladde Beves to the stable;
 Iosian be-held him be-fore,
 She seh his browe to-tore;
 After Bonefas she gan grede,
 At stable dore to him she sede:
 'Be the moder, that me hath bore,
 Ner this mannes browe to-tore,
 Me wolde thenke be his fasoun,
 That hit were Beves of Hamtoun!'
 Whan that hors herde nevene
 His kende lordes stevene,
 His rakenteis he al te-rof
 And wente in to the kourt wel kof
 And neide & made miche pride
 With gret ioie be ech a side.
 'Allas!' tho queth Iosiane,
 'Wel mani a man is bane
 To dai he worth i-laught,
 Er than this stede ben icaught!'
 Thanne seide Beves & lough:
 'Ich can take hit wel inough:

*Atom, At home spel, tale warisoun, treasure Ner, Were not nevene,
 name stevene, voice rakenteis, chains te-rof, rent asunder
 kof, quickly worth i-laught, may have got*

Wolde ye,' a sede, 'yeve me leve,
 Hit ne scholde norman greve!'
 'Take hit thanne,' she sede,
 'And in to stable thow it lede
 And teie it thar it stod,
 And thow schelt have mede gode!'
 Beves to the hors teh;
 Tho the hors him knew and seh,
 Hit ne wawede no fot,
 Til Beves hadde the stirop;
 Beves in to the sadel him threw,
 Thar bi that maide him wel knew.
 Anon seide Iosian with than:
 'O Beves, gode lemman,
 Let me with the reke
 In that maner, we han ispeke,
 And thenk, thow me to wive tok,
 Whan ich me false godes for-sok:
 Now thow hast thin hors Arondel,
 The swerd ich the fette schel,
 And let me wende with the siththe
 Hom in to thin owene kiththe!'

text of EUGEN KÖLBING, Ph.D. (E.E.T.S.,
Extra Series, XLVI, XLVIII, LXV).

teh, *went* wawede, *moved*

SIR LIBEAUS DISCONUS

C. H. E. L. i. 284, 289, 295, 312. The story of 'Libeaus Disconus,' the 'Fair Unknown,' is rather like the story of Gareth. Gyngalyn, son of Gawain, nameless and unknown, is made knight and called Sir Libeaus Disconus. He begs from Arthur the first adventure that comes, and is sent to help the imprisoned lady of Sinadoun, but is at first flouted and despised as a churl by the damsel who comes as messenger. There are the usual incredible adventures in which Sir Libeaus is invariably victorious. In the passage that follows he has just defeated Sir Otes de Lile, whose 'fader an erl was white,' and whose mother was 'the countesse of Carlile,' and who has attacked Sir Libeaus with a small army of retainers. The poem, containing over two thousand lines, is written in pretty jingling stanzas. It belongs to the first half of the fourteenth century. The dialect is south-eastern. MS Lincoln's Inn, 150. The quotation begins at l. 1297.

Nou reste we her a while
 Of sir Otes de Lile
 And telle we other tales.
 Libeaus rod many a mile
 And sigh aventurs file
 In Irland and in Wales.
 Hit fell in the month of June,
 Whan the fenell hongeth in toun
 Grene in semely sales;
 The someris day is long,
 Mery is the foules song
 And notes of the nightingales:
 That time Libeaus gan ride
 Be a river side
 And sigh a fair cite
 With paleis proud in pride
 And castelles high and wide
 And Yates greet plente.
 He axed, what hit hight;
 The maide seide anon right:
 ‘Sir, I will telle the!
 Men clepeth hit Ile d’or;
 Her hath be fightinge mor,
 Than owher in any countre.
 For a lady of pris,
 Roddy as rose on rise,
 This countre is in doute.
 A geaunt, that hatte Maugis,
 Nowher his per ther nis,
 Her hath beleide aboute.
 He is as blak as pich;
 Nowher ther is non swich
 Of dedes sterne and stoute.
 What knight, that passeth the bregge,
 His armes he mot doun legge
 And to the geaunt aloute.

sigh, <i>saw</i>	file, <i>foul</i> (? <i>fele, many</i>)	sales, <i>halls</i>	Roddy, <i>Red</i>
rise, <i>spray</i>	hatte, <i>is named</i>	per, <i>peer</i>	bregge, <i>bridge</i>
doun legge, <i>lay down</i>	aloute, <i>do homage</i>	beleide, <i>beset</i>	

He is thritty fote of lengthe
 And miche more of strengthe,
 Than other knightes five:
 Sir Libeaus, well bethenk the,
 That thou with him ne meng the;
 He is grim to descriue.
 He bereth on everich browe
 As bristelles of a sowe,
 His heed greet as an hive;
 His armes the lengthe of an elle;
 His fistes beth full felle,
 Dintes with to drive.'

Quoth Libeaus: 'Maide hende,
 My way nou will I wende
 For alle his strokis ille.
 Yif god me grace sende,
 Er this day come to ende,
 With fight I hope him spille:
 I have y-sein grete okes
 Falle for windes strokes
 And smale stonde full stille.
 Thaugh I be ying and lite,
 To him will I smite;
 Let god do his wille!'

[There is a terrible combat.]

Than a newe fight began;
 Either to other ran
 And delde dentes strong.
 Many a gentilman
 And ladies, whit as swan,
 For Libeaus hondes wrong;
 For Maugis in the feld
 Forcarf Libeaus scheld
 With dente of armes long.
 Than Libeaus ran away,
 Ther Maugis scheld lay,
 And up he gan hit fonge

meng, mix Dintes, Blows hende, gentle strokis, blows spille, slay
 Forcarf, Cut in pieces fonge, take

And ran ayain to him;
 With strokes stout and grim
 Togider they gonне asaile.
 Beside the water brim,
 Till hit derked dim,
 Betwene hem was bataile.
 Libeaus was werrouр wight
 And smitte a strok of might
 Thorugh gipell, plate and maile.
 Forth with the scholder bon
 His right arm fell anoon
 Into the feld, saunz faile.
 The geaunt this gan se,
 That he schulde slawe be;
 He flih with might and main.
 Libeaus after gan te;
 With sterne strokes thre
 He smitte his bak atweyn.
 The geaunt ther beleved,
 Libeaus smitte of his heved:
 Ther of he was fain.
 He bar the heed into the toun;
 With a fair processioun
 The folk com him ayain.

text of MAX KALUZA (Leipzig, 1890).

gipell, coat te, go beleved, remained

SIR ISUMBRAS

C. H. E. L. I. 289, 315. ‘The theme of *Sir Isumbras* is that of Christian humility, the story itself being an adaptation of the legend of Sir Eustace. Sir Isumbras is a knight who, through pride, falls from his high estate by the will of Providence. He is severely stricken; his possessions, his children, and, lastly, his wife, are taken away, and he himself becomes a wanderer. After much privation nobly endured, he has learned his lesson and arrives at the court of a queen, who proves to be his long-lost wife. His children are then miraculously restored and he resumes once more his exalted rank.’ In illustration of stanza LXIV it should be added that his three young children were seized and carried off respectively by a leopard, a unicorn and a lion. The story is a variation upon the theme of ‘the proud king,’ familiar as treated by Longfellow and Morris. The poem contains 794 lines in pleasant

stanza form. It belongs to the later part of the fourteenth century, and is transmitted in the Thornton MS (Lincoln). See also *Palaestra*, xv. (1901). The quotation gives the opening stanzas and the conclusion. One of the intermediate stanzas, with its happy description of medieval ships, may be quoted here. The bereaved father and mother reach 'the Greckes see':

Thare thay sawe stormes bloo:
And appone the lond thus als thay stude,
Thay sawe come saylante over the flode
A thowsand schippes and moo.
And als thay stode so appone the lande,
And lokede in-to the see strande,
Those schippes sawe thay ryde
With toppe-castelles sett one lofte,
Of riche golde thame semed wroghte,
Stremours fro thame ferre gane glyde.
The sowdanne hym-selfe was therinne,
That Cristendome was commene to wynne,
Thare wakkyns woo fulle wyde!
The knyghte thoghte that he wolde wende
In-to that havene at ferrere ende,
A littile ther bysyde.

Jhesu Crist, Lorde of hevene kynge,
Graunte us alle his dere blyssyng,
And hevene unto oure mede!
Now, hende in haule, and ye wolde here
Of eldirs that by-fore us were,
That lyffede in arethede,
I wille yow telle of a knyghte,
That bothe was stalworthe and wyghte,
And worthily undir wede:
His name was hottene syr Ysambrace,
Swilke a knyghte als he was
Now lyffes nowrewhare in lede.
He was mekille mane and lange,
With schuldirs brode and armes strange,
That semly were to see;
So was he bothe faire and heghe,
Alle hym loffede that hym seghe,
Se hende a mane was hee!
He luffede glewmene wele in haulle,
He gafe thame robis riche of palle,
Bothe golde and also fee;

hende in haule, *gentles in hall*

arethede, *olden times*

lede, *land*

Of curtasye was he kynge,
 Of mete and drynke no nythynge,
 One lyfe was none so fre.

Als fayre a lady to wyefe had he
 Als any earthly mane thurte see,
 With tunge als I yow nevene;
 Knave childire had thay thre,
 Thay were the faireste that myghte be
 Undir the kynge of hevene!
 Bot in his hert a pride was broghte,
 Of Goddis werkes gafe he noghte,
 His mercys for to nevene;
 So longe he reyngned in his pride,
 That God wolde no lenger habydye,
 To hym he sent a stevene.

It felle so appone a daye,
 The knyghe went to the wode to playe,
 His foreste for to see;
 And als he come by a derne sty,
 A fowle herde he syngē one hy
 Fulle heghe upone a tree,
 And said, ‘Welcome, syr Ysambrace,
 Thou hafes forgetyne whate thou was,
 For pride of golde and fee!
 The kyng of hevene gretis the soo,
 Werldes wele the bus for-goo,
 In elde or youthe thou sallē dry woo,
 Chese whethir es lever to thee!’

With carefullē herte and sygheyngē sare,
 The knyghe felle on his knes al bare,
 And bothe his handis uphelde:—
 ‘Werldes wele I wille for-sake,
 And to Goddes mercy I me bytake,
 To hym my saule I yelde!
 In youthe I maye bothe ryde and goo,
 When I ame alde I may nott so,
 My lymmes wille waxe unwelde;

nevene, tell stevene, dream derne, secret the bus, thee behoves
 dry woo, endure woe whethir es lever, which is preferable

Now, Lorde, yif it thi wille bee,
 In yowthede penance send thou mee,
 And welthe appone myne elde!'
 The foule thane toke ane heghe flyghte,
 Alle-one he leved that drery knyghte,
 And sone he went awaye;
 And whenne he of the fowle had no syghte,
 His stede, that was bothe stronge and wyghte,
 Sone dede downe undir hym laye.
 His hawkes and his howndis bothe,
 Wente to the wode, als thay were wrothe,
 Ilkone a dyverse waye.
 Whate wondir was thofe hym ware wo,
 One fote now moste hym nedis goo,
 To pyne turnes alle his playe!...

At the end he and his new-found wife desire to convert the Saracens; but they reject the offer, and demand instead that Sir Isumbras should

come to thaire perlement,
 And there be bothe hangede and brynt,
 And alle that with hym were.

Moreover they lead a great host against him, and there is a battle with terrible odds against the Christian king. At a moment when he despairs of victory,

(LXIV) There come rydande knyghtes three
 Appone thre bestes wylde;
 One on a lebarde, another on a unycorne,
 And one on a lyone he come by-forne,
 That was thair eldeste childe!
 In angells wede were thay alle clede,
 An angelle thame to the batelle lede,
 That semely was to sene:
 Thay slewen the haythene knyghtes swa,
 And of the Sarazenes many alswa,
 Ya twenty thowsandez and thre.
 Sir Ysambrace prayed the knyghtes swaa,
 Hame with hym that thay walde gaa,
 And be of his menye;
 Thay ansuerde, als the angelle tham kende,
 'For the were we to the batelle sende,
 Thyne awenne sonnes are wee!'

menye, *retinue*

kende, *instructed*

awenne, *own*

Ofte was syr Ysambrace wele and woo,
 Bot never yitt als he was tho,
 One knees than he hym sett;
 He grett, and sayde wyth mylde stevene,
 ‘Thankede be the heghe kyng of hevene,
 My bale thane hase hebett!’
 Sir Ysambrace and that lady free
 Kyssed alle thaire childir three,
 Ilkane for joye thay grett;
 Mare joye myghte never no mane see,
 Thane men myghte one thame see,
 In armes whenne thay were mett.
 A ryche ceté was there besyde,
 And syr Ysambrace byfore gane ryde
 His sonnes hame for to lede;
 Chambirs fande thay faire and bryghte,
 Robys faire and redy dyghte,
 And thare thay chaunged thaire wede;
 Riche metis wantedt thame nane,
 Nowther of wylde nor of tame,
 Nor no riche brede.
 Fyve landis thus gunne thay wynne,
 And stabylde Crystyndome thame inne,
 In storyes thus als we rede.
 A fulle riche kynge thane was syr Ysambrace,
 And coverde he hase alle his myscas,
 He lyffes nowe fulle richely;
 Ilkane of his sonnes he gafe a lande,
 Durste na mane agayne thame stande,
 Whare so that thay solde fare.
 Thay lyffede and dyed with gud entent,
 And sythene alle tille hevene thay went,
 Whenne that thay dede ware.
 Praye we now to hevenes kynge,
 He gyffe us alle his dere blyssyng
 Nowe and evermare!
 Amene. Amene.
 Explicit Syr Ysambrace.

text of J. O. HALLIWELL: *The Thornton Romances*, Camden Society, 1844.

tho, then bett, amended myscas, misfortunes

SIR FERUMBRAS

C. H. E. L. I. 288, 293, 302-303. ‘*Sir Ferumbras* relates the capture of Rome by the Saracen hosts and its relief by Charlemagne. The usual combat takes place, this time between Olivier and Ferumbras, son of the sultan of Babylon. The Saracen is, as usual, overcome and accepts Christianity.’ Ferumbras is indeed none other than the redoubtable giant Fierabras, whose balsam Don Quixote regretted that he had not, after his fight with the Biscayan. The poem contains over six thousand lines, not all extant. It belongs to the end of the fourteenth century. The dialect is southern (probably Devonshire) with an unusually large mixture of midland and northern forms. The quoted passage begins at line 602. It is part of the long account of the fight. The rattling ballad measure suits the subject admirably.

Now by-gynt a strong batayl be-twene this knyghtes twayne,
 Ayther gan other harde assayl, bothe wyth myght & myne,
 they hewe to-gadre wyth swerdes dent, faste with bothen hondes,
 Of helmes & sheldes that fyr out went, so sparkes doth of brondes;
 So sterne strokes thay Araughte, eyther til other with strengthe
 that al the erthe ther-of quaghte, a myle & more on lenghthe.
 they weren so eger bothe of mod, & eke so fers to fighte,
 that eyther of hem than thoghte god, to sle other if he mighthe.
 Hit ne might noght longe endure, the batail betwene hem two,
 for neyther ne knew of other mesure, bot evere thay foghte so.
 Olyver hym by-thoghte than his los was lost in londe,
 Bot yf he slegheth that hethene man, & ther-for he gan him fonde,
 & smot him on the helm an hegh, & a gobet away a bar;
 Ys chyke that swerd tho cam so negh, that sum of is berd yt schar;
 the strok a doun him glente anon, ac he with is scheld him hente,
 & elles had he his schuldre bon for-corvyn wyth that dente.
 Fyrumbras saide til hym than, ‘maugre mote thou have!
 Suththen y was furst i-bore to man, my berd nas noght so schave.’
 the Sarsyn by-gan to waxe wroth, egre, & eke fere,
 & hef up ys swerd, & til him a goth, & smot to Olyvere;
 Al anoneward the helm an hegh ys crest a bar adoun,
 & the cercle of gold that sat ther-bey, the perles wer worth a
 toun,
 & of ys avantaile wyth that stroke a carf wel many a maylle.
 than olyver profrede til him a stroke & gan him for to saylle,
 quaghte, quaked fonde, try gobet, piece a bar, he bore glente, glanced
 hente, seized for-corvyn, carved away maugre, malediction Suththen,
 Since a goth, he goes anoneward, along avantaile, visor maylle, link

& than by-gan the stronge fight betwene thes knightes tweye;
 As twey lyons thay furde right, that wolde slen his preye.
 the Sarasyne sayde to the knyght, ‘by Mahoun thou schalt deye!’
 than said Olyver ‘by god almyght, y hope thou schalt leye!’
 Ayeyn they wente to-gydre thare, & hur armure hewe a-sonder;
 Hure strokes fulle so styth & sare, thay schulde so doth the
 thonder.

Helmes & hauberkes thay kutte a two with hure strokes rounde,
 & eyther enpaynede him other to slo, ac yut nad thay no wounde.
 Fyrumbras was aggreved sare that Olyver hym stod so longe,
 & than him wondrede wat a ware, for he was so stronge.
 He drew him thanne apart & sayde, ‘y pray the, iantaile knight,
 As thou lovest that ilke mayde that baar thy god almyght,—
 Wel y wot thou art ful gret of fame, a bettere knight wot y
 non,—

Tel me ther-for thy righte name, Wat calleth me the at hom.
 Wyth many a man y have y-faught, fond y nevere thy peer;
 the grete strokes thou hastest me raught, sitteth my bones neer.
 thou toldest me to day or thys thy righte name was Garyn;
 Hit is noght so, y wot to wys, by Mahoun & Appolyn;
 If that Garyn were thy name, y knewe it wel aplight
 In tal the world scholde sprynge fame of such a noble knight.
 Tel me now ther-for that sothe, as thou art gent & free,
 & suththe schul we to-gadre bothe falle to fight a-ye.’
 the iantail knyght with-drow him than, & spak with-oute
 duelle,

‘Herkne now, thou hethene man, & that sothe i wol the telle.
 Olyver ys my name right, a doththeper y am of fraunce,
 & am an erld & a knyght, as have ich gode chaunce.
 Y am Charlis Emys sone, y-come of men of gode,
 & in my moder half i am y-come al-so of kynges blode.
 now have y to the her itold my name with-oute lye,
 If thou art to fighte bold, com on, y the diffye!’

Sir Ferumbras, edited by SIDNEY J. HERRTAGE, B.A.
 (Charlemagne Romances, I. E.E.T.S. Ex. Ser. XXXIV.)

aplight, indeed a-ye, again duelle, deceit doththeper, douzepere
 (one of the twelve peers) Charlis Emys sone, Charles' uncle's son

LE MORTE ARTHUR

C. H. E. L. I. 235, 270, 313. *Le Morte Arthur* must not be confused with the alliterative *Morte Arthure* described on a later page. The poem, of which Lancelot is really the hero and his love for Guenevere the theme, deals with the close of Arthur's life, and the stanzas describing the casting away of 'excalaber' and the passing of the king 'into the vale of Avelovne' deserve special notice from the readers of Tennyson. It belongs to the end of the fourteenth century, and its dialect is midland—of what exact part is disputed. It contains nearly four thousand lines in pleasant stanzas; but there is apparently a leaf missing from the unique manuscript (Harley 2252), so the exact number is not known. The quoted passage tells for the first time in surviving English literature a story now familiar. Lancelot has left Arthur and the knights and is with the lord of Ascolot.

Therle had a daughter that was hym dere.
 Mykelle launcelott she be-helde,
 hyr rode was rede as blossom on brere,
 Or floure that springith in the felde;
 Glad she was to sitte hym nere,
 The noble knight under shelde,
 Wepinge was hyr moste chere,
 So mykelle on hym her herte gan helde.

Uppe than rose that mayden stille,
 And to hyr chamber wente she tho,
 Downe uppon hir bedde she felle
 That nighe hyr herte brast in two.
 launcelot wiste what was hyr wylle,
 Welle he knew by other mo,
 hyr brother klepitte he hym tylle,
 And to hyr chamber gonне they go;

he satte hym downe for the maydens sake
 uppon hyr bedde there she lay,
 Courtesessly to hyr he spake
 For to conforte that fayre may.
 In hyr armys she gan hym take,
 And these wordis ganne she say,
 'Sir, bot yif that ye it make,
 Saff my lyff no leche may.'

rode, cheek

klepitte, called

tylle, to

leche, doctor

'lady,' he sayd, 'thou moste lette,
 For me ne giff the no thyng ille,
 In another stede myne hert is sette,
 It is not at myne owne wille;
 In erthe is no thinge that shalle me lette
 To be thy knight lowde and stille,
 A-nother tyme we may be mette
 Whan thou may better speke thy fille.'

'Sithe I of the ne may have more,
 As thou arte hardy knight and fre,
 In the turnement that thou wold bere
 Sum signe of myne that men might se':
 'lady, thy sleve thou shalte of-shere,
 I wolde it take for the love of the;
 So did I nevyr no ladyes ere,
 Bot one that most hathe lovide me.'

[Lancelot departs, and after being wounded in the tournament returns till he is healed.]

By that was launcelot hole and fere,
 Buskis hym, and makis alle yare,
 his leve hathe he take there,
 The mayden wepte for sorow and care;
 'Sir, yif that youre willis were,
 Sithe I of the ne may have mare,
 Som thinge ye woulde be-leve me here
 To loke on, whan me longith sare.'
 launcelot spake wyth herte fre
 For to comforte that ladye hende,
 'Myne armure shalle I leve wyth the,
 And in thy brothers wille I wende;
 loke thou ne longe not after me,
 For here I may no lenger lende,
 longe tyme ne shalle it noght be
 That I ne shalle eyther come or sende.'

[At the court of Arthur much has happened, and Lancelot goes away in anger and retires to a forest.]

moste lette, <i>must cease</i>	lette, <i>prevent</i>	fere, <i>well</i>	Buskis, <i>Hastens</i>
yare, <i>ready</i>	be-leve, <i>leave</i>	hende, <i>gentle</i>	

Now leve we launcelot there he was
 withe the ermyte in the forest grene,
 And telle we forthe of the case
 That touchith Arthur the kynge so kene.
 Sir Gawayne on the morne to conselle he tase,
 And mornyd sore for the quene,
 In to a toure than he hym has,
 And ordeyned the beste there them by-twene;
 And as they in there talkynge stode
 To ordeyne how it beste myght be,
 A feyre ryver undyr the toure yode,
 And sone there-in gonne they see
 A lytelle bote of shappe fulle goode
 To-theyme-ward wyth the streme gon te,
 There myght none feyrer sayle on flode,
 Ne better forgid as of tree.

Whan kynge Arthure saw that sighte,
 he wondrid of the riche apparrayle
 That was aboute the bote i-dighte,
 So richely was it coveryd sanzfayle
 In maner of a voute wyth clothis idighte,
 Alle shynand as gold as yt ganne sayle:
 Than sayd Syr Gawayne the good knight
 ‘This bote is of a ryche entayle.’

‘For sothe, syr,’ sayd the kynge tho,
 ‘Suche one sawgh I nevyr are;
 Thedir I rede now that we go,
 Som aventures shalle we se thare;
 And yif it be wyth-in dight so
 As with-oute, or gayer mare,
 I darre savely say therto
 By-gynne wille auntres or aught yare.’

Oute of the toure adowne they wente,
 The kynge arthur and syr Gawayne;
 To the bote they yede wyth-oute stynte
 They two allone, for sothe to sayne;

tase, takes gon te, did come voute, vault are, ere auntres, adventures

And whan they come there as it lente,
 They by-helde it faste, is not to layne;
 A clothe that over the bote was bente,
 Sir Gawayne lyfte up, and went in bayne.

Whan they were in, wyth-outen lese
 Fulle richely arayed they it founde,
 And in the myddis a feyre bedde was
 For any kynge of Cristene londe.
 Than as swithe, or they wold sese,
 The koverlet lyfte they up wyth hande,
 A dede woman they sighe ther was,
 The fayrest mayde that myght be founde.

To sir Gawayne than sayd the kynge,
 'For sothe, Dethe was to un-hende
 Whan he wold thus fayre a thinge
 Thus yonge oute of the world do wende;
 For hyr biaute, wyth oute lesynge,
 I wold fayne wete of hyr kynde,
 What she was, this sweet derelynge,
 And in hyr lyff where she gonne lende.'

Sir Gawayne his eyen than on hyr caste,
 And by-held hyr fast wyth herte fre,
 So that he knew welle at the laste
 That the mayde of Ascalote was she,
 Whiche he som tyme had wowyd faste
 his owne leman for to be;
 But she aunsweryd hym ay in haste,
 'To none bot launcelot wold she te.'

To the kinge than sayd sir Gawayne tho,
 'Thinke ye not on this endris day
 Whan my lady the quene and we two
 stode to-gedir in youre play,
 Off a mayde I told you tho
 That launcelot lovyd paramoure ay.'
 'Gawayne, for sothe,' the kynge sayd tho,
 'Whan thou it saydiste, wele thinke I may':

is not to layne, '*I will not conceal'* bayne, readily do wende, make go
 gonne lende, did dwell endris, other

'For sothe, syr,' than sayd sir Gawayne,

'This is the mayd that I of spake:

Most in this world, is not to layne,

She lovid launcelot du lake.'

'For sothe,' the kynge than gon to sayne,

'Me rewith the deth of hyr for his sake,

The inchesoun wold I wete fulle fayne,

For sorow I trow deth gon hyre take.'

Than sir Gawayne, the good knight,

Sought aboute hyr wyth-oute stynte,

And found a purs fulle riche a righte

Wyth gold and perlis that was i-bente;

Alle empty semyd it noght to sight.

That purs fulle sone in honde he hente,

A letter there-of than oute he twight:

Than wete they wold fayne what it mente;

What there was wreten, wete they wolde.

And sir Gawayn it toke the kynge,
And bad hym openyd that he sholde.

So dyde he sone wyth-oute lesyng;
Than found he whan it was un-folde

Bothe the ende and the by-gynnyng,
Thus was it wreten, as men me tolde,

Off that fayre maydens deyng;

'To kynge Arthur, and alle his knighthis

That longe to the Rounde table,

That corteyse bene, and most of myghtis

Doughty, and noble, trew, and stable,

And most worshipfulle in all fyghtis

To the nedefulle, helpinge and profitable,

The mayde of Ascalot to rightis

Sendith gretinge, wyth-outen fable:

'To you alle my playnte I make

Off the wronge that me is wroghte,

But noght in maner to undir-take

That any of you sholde mend it ought;

Bot onely I say, for this sake
 That thoughе this world were throw sought,
 Men shold no where fynd your make
 Alle noblisсе to fynde that myght be sought;

‘There-fore to you to undirstand
 That for I trewly many a day
 Have lovid lelyest in londe,
 Dethe hathe me fette of this world away;

To wete for whome yif ye wille founde
 That I so longe for in langoure lay,
 To say the sothe wille I noght wounde,
 For gaynes it not for to say nay;

‘To say you the sothe tale,
 For whome I have suffred this woo,—
 I say deth hathe me take wyth bale
 For the noblest knight that may go;

Is none so doughty dyntis to dale,
 So ryalle, ne so fayre ther-to,
 But so churlysshe of maners in feld ne hale
 Ne know I none, of frende, ne fo;

‘Off foo, ne frend, the sothe to say,
 So un-hend of thewis is there none,
 his gentilnesse was alle a-way,
 Alle churlysshe maners he had in wone;

For, for no thinge that I coude pray,
 Knelynge, ne wepinge, wyth rewfulle mone,
 To be my leman he sayd evyr nay,
 And sayd shortly he wold have none.

‘For-thy, lordis, for his sake
 I toke to herte grete sorow and care,
 So at the laste deth gonне me take,
 So that I might lyve na mare;

For trew lovyngе had I suche wrake,
 And was of blysse i-browghte alle bare,
 Alle was for launcelote du lake,—
 To wete wisely for whom it ware.’...

make, mate	lelyest, loyallest	dyntis, blows	dale, deal
un-hend, ungentle	thewis, manners	wone, abundance	

'Syr gawayne,' sayd the kyng thoo,
 'What is now thy best rede?
 How mow we wyth thys maydyn do?'
 Syr gawayne sayd, 'so god me spede,
 Iff that ye wille assent ther-to,
 Worshippfully we shulle hyr lede
 In to the palys, and bery her so
 As fallys a dukys daughter in dede.'

Ther-to the kyng assentid sone;
 Syr gawayne dyd men sone be yare,
 And worshippfully, as felle to done,
 In-to the palyse they her bare.
 The kyng than tolde wyth-out lone
 To alle hys barons, lesse and mare
 How launcelot nolde noughe graunte hyr bone,
 Ther-fore she dyed for sorow and care....

Le Morte Arthur, edited by J. DOUGLAS BRUCE, Ph.D.,
 Early English Text Society (Extra Series), LXXXVIII.
 See also *Two Morte D'Arthur Romances* (Everyman).

dyd, caused felle to done, befitting lone, concealment

THE TALE OF GAMELYN

C. H. E. L. I. 298, 367. *The Tale of Gamelyn* 'is a story of the youngest son cruelly treated by his tyrannical elder brother, and coming to his own again with the help of the king of outlaws. Thomas Lodge made a novel out of it, and kept a number of incidents—the defeat of the wrestler...the loyalty of Adam Spencer and the meeting with the outlaws—and so these found their way to Shakespeare, and, along with them, the spirit of the greenwood and its freedom. *The Tale of Gamelyn* is *As You Like It* without Rosalind or Celia. ...*Gamelyn* is found only in MSS of *The Canterbury Tales*; Skeat's conjecture is a fair one, that it was kept by Chaucer among his papers, to be worked up, some day, into *The Yeoman's Tale*. It was long attributed to Chaucer, and used to be printed as *The Coke's Tale of Gamelyn*. From Gamelyn to the Gamwells of the Robin Hood stories is but a step. The poem contains 902 lines. It belongs to the middle of the fourteenth century and is written in the east midland dialect. The quoted passage begins at line 169.

Litheth, and lesteneth, and holdeth your tonge,
 And ye schul heere talkyng of Gamelyn the yonge.
 Ther was ther bysiden cryed a wrastlyng,
 And therfor ther was set up a ram and a ryng;
 And Gamelyn was in wille to wende therto,
 For to preven his might what he cowthe do.
 ‘Brother,’ seyde Gamelyn, ‘by seynt Richer,
 Thou most lene me to-nyght a litel courser
 That is freisch to the spores on for to ryde;
 I most on an erande a litel her byside.’

‘By god!’ seyde his brother, ‘of steedes in my stalle
 Go and chese the the best and spare non of alle
 Of steedes or of coursers that stonden hem bisyde;
 And tel me, goode brother, whider thou wolt ryde.’

‘Her byside, brother, is cryed a wrastlyng,
 And therfor schal be set up a ram and a ryng;
 Moche worschip it were, brother, to us alle,
 Might I the ram and the ryng bring home to this halle.’
 A steede ther was sadeled, smertely and skeet;
 Gamelyn did a paire spores fast on his feet.

He sette his foot in the styrop, the steede he bystrood,
 And toward the wrastelyng the yonge child rood.

Tho Gamelyn the yonge was ridden out at gat,
 The false knight his brother lokked it after that,
 And bysoughte Iesu Crist, that is heven kyng,
 He mighte breke his nekke in that wrastelyng.

As sone as Gamelyn com ther the place was,
 He lighte doun of his steede and stood on the gras,
 And ther he herd a frankeleyn wayloway syng,
 And bigan bitterly his hondes for to wrynge.

‘Goode man,’ seyde Gamelyn, ‘why makestow this fare?
 Is ther no man that may you helpe out of this care?’

‘Allas!’ seyde this frankeleyn, ‘that ever was I bore!
 For tweye stalworthe sones I wene that I have lore;
 A champioun is in the place that hath i-wrought me sorwe,
 For he hath slain my two sones but-if god hem borwe.
 I wold yeve ten pound, by Iesu Crist! and more,
 With the nones I fand a man to handelen him sore.’

Litheth, Harken lesteneth, listen bysiden, near by wayloway, wellaway! wene, think wene, think lore, lost lore, lost skeet, swiftly but-if, unless borwe, save With the nones, Provided that

'Goode man,' sayde Gamelyn, 'wilt thou wel doon,
Hold myn hors, whil my man draweth of my schoon,
And help my man to kepe my clothes and my steede,
And I wil into place go to loke if I may speede.'

'By god!' sayde the frankeleyn, 'anon it schal be doon;
I wil my-self be thy man and drawnen of thy schoon,
And wende thou into place, Iesu Crist the speede,
And drede not of thy clothes nor of thy goode steede.'

Barfoot and ungert Gamelyn in cam,
Alle that weren in the place heede of him they nam,
How he durste auntere him of him to doon his might
That was so doughty champioun in wrastlyng and in fight.

Up sterte the champioun rapely anoon,
Toward yonge Gamelyn he bigan to goon,
And sayde, 'who is thy fader and who is thy sire?
For sothe thou art a gret fool that thou come hire!'

Gamelyn answerde the champioun tho,
'Thou knewe wel my fader whil he couthe go,
Whiles he was on lyve, by saint Martyn!
Sir Iohan of Boundys was his name, and I Gamelyn.'

'Felaw,' seyde the champioun, 'al-so mot I thryve,
I knew wel thy fader whil he was on lyve;
And thiself, Gamelyn, I wil that thou it heere,
Whil thou were a yong boy a moche schrewe thou were.'

Than seyde Gamelyn and swor by Cristes ore,
'Now I am older woxe thou schalt me fynde a more!'

'Be god!' sayde the champioun, 'welcome mote thou be!
Come thou ones in myn hond schalt thou never the.'

It was wel withinne the night and the moone schon,
Whan Gamelyn and the champioun togider gonnew goon.
The champioun caste tornes to Gamelyn that was prest,
And Gamelyn stood stille and bad him doon his best.

Thanne seyde Gamelyn to the champioun,
'Thou art faste aboute to brynge me adoun;
Now I have i-proved many tornes of thyne,
Thow most,' he seyde, 'proven on or tuo of myne.'

nam, took auntere, adventure rapely, quickly tho, then moche
schrewe, great evil-doer ore, grace the, thrive gonnew goon, did go
tornes, tricks prest, ready

Gamelyn to the champioun yede smertely anon,
 Of all the tornes that he cowthe he schewed him but oon,
 And kaste him on the lefte syde that thre ribbes tobrak,
 And therto his oon arm that yaf a gret crak.
 Thanne seyde Gamelyn smertely anoon,
 ‘Schal it be holde for a cast or elles for noon?’
 ‘By god!’ seyde the champioun ‘whether that it bee,
 He that cometh ones in thin hand schal he never thee!’
 Than seyde the frankeleyn that had his sones there,
 ‘Blessed be thou, Gamelyn that ever thou bore were!’
 The frankeleyn seyde to the champioun of him stood him
 noon eye,
 ‘This is yonge Gamelyn that taughte the this pleye.’
 Agein answerd the champioun that liked nothing wel,
 ‘He is our alther mayster and his pley is right fel;
 Sith I wrastled first it is i-go ful yore,
 But I was nevere in my lyf handeled so sore.’
 Gamelyn stood in the place allone withoute serk,
 And seyde, ‘if ther be eny mo lat hem come to werk;
 The champioun that peyned him to werke so sore,
 It semeth by his continaunce that he wil nomore.’
 Gamelyn in the place stood as stille as stoon,
 For to abyde wrastelyng but ther com noon;
 Ther was noon with Gamelyn wolde wrastle more,
 For he handled the champioun so wonderly sore....
 Tho that wardeynes were of that wrastelyng
 Come and broughte Gamelyn the ram and the ryng,
 And seyden, ‘have, Gamelyn the ryng and the ram,
 For the beste wrasteler that ever here cam.’
 Thus wan Gamelyn the ram and the ryng,
 And wente with moche ioye home in the mornyng.
 His brother seih wher he cam with the grete rowte,
 And bad schitte the gate and holde him withoute.
 The porter of his lord was ful sore agast,
 And sterte anon to the gate and lokked it fast.

The Tale of Gamelyn, edited by W. W. SKEAT.

yede, *went* whether, *whichever* noon eye, *no awe* alther, *of all* i-go, *ago*
 yore, *long* serk, *shirt* Tho, *Those* seih, *saw* rowte, *crowd*

THE SQUYR OF LOWE DEGRE

C. H. E. L. I. 288, 315. This very pleasant romance has the favourite theme of a humble wooer's toilsome but finally happy winning of a high-born lady. 'Its English origin and sentiment, no less than its pictures of medieval life, continue to make this romance one of the most readable of its kind.' It is mercifully brief, containing but 1132 lines. It belongs to the early part of the fifteenth century, and its dialect is south midland. The extract below begins at line 739. The king is trying to distract his daughter from thoughts of her undesirable squire. It seems a pity to intrude a prosaic gloss into such a delectable catalogue! There is no early MS. The authority is Copland's print (c. 1550-60).

To morowe ye shall on hunting fare,
 And ryde, my daughter, in a chare,
 It shalbe covered with velvet reede,
 And clothes of fyne golde al about your hed,
 With damske, white, and asure blewe,
 Wel dyapred with lyllyes newe;
 Your pomelles shalbe ended with gold,
 Your chaynes enameled many a folde;
 Your mantel of ryche degré,
 Purpil palle and armyne fre;
 Jennettes of spayne, that ben so wyght,
 Trapped to the ground with velvet bright;
 Ye shall have harp, sautry and songe,
 And other myrthés you amonge;
 Ye shall have rumney and malmesyne,
 Both ypocrasse and vernage wyne,
 Mountrose and wyne of greke,
 Both algrade and respice eke,
 Antioche and bastarde,
 Pyment also and garnarde;
 Wyne of Greke and muscadell,
 Both claré, pyment and rochell.
 The reed your stomake to defye,
 And pottes of osey set you by.
 You shall have venison ybake,
 The best wylde foule yt may be take.
 A lese of grehound with you to strike,
 And hert and hynde and other lyke.
 Ye shalbe set at such a tryst
 That herte and hynde shall come to your fyst,

Your dysease to dryve you fro,
To here the bugles there yblow,
With theyr begles in that place,
And sevenscore raches at his rechase.
Homward thus shall ye ryde,
On haukyng by the ryvers syde,
With goshauke and with gentyll fawcon,
With egle, horne and merlyon.
Whan you come home, your men amonge,
Ye shall have revell, daunce and songe;
Lytle chyldren, great and smale,
Shall syng, as doth the nyghtyngale.
Than shall ye go to your evensong,
With tenours and trebles among;
Threscore of copes, of damaske bryght,
Full of perles they shalbe pyght;
Your aulter clothes of taffata,
And your sicles all of taffetra.
Your sensours shalbe of golde,
Endent with asure many a folde.
Your quere nor organ songe shall wante
With countre note and dyscant,
The other halfe on orgayns playeng,
With yonge chyldren full fayre syngyn.
Than shall ye go to your suppere,
And sytte in tentes in grene arbere,
With clothes of aras pyght to the grounde,
With saphyres set and dyamonde.
A cloth of golde abought your heade,
With popiniayes pyght with pery reed,
And offycers all at your wyll:
All maner delights to bryng you tyll.
The nightingale sitting on a thorne
Shall synge you notes both even & morne.
An hundred knightes truly tolde
Shall play with bowles in alayes colde,
Your disease to drive awaie:
To se the fisshes in poles plaie;
And then walke in arbere up and downe,
To se the floures of great renowne:

To a draw brydge than shall ye,
The one halfe of stone, the other of tre;
A barge shall mete you full ryght
With xxiiij. ores full bryght,
With trompettes and with claryowne,
The fresshe water to rowe up and downe.
Than shall ye go to the salte fome,
Your maner to se, or ye come home,
With lxxx. shypes of large towre,
With dromedaryes of great honour,
And carackes with sayles two,
The sweftest that on water may goo,
With galyes good upon the haven,
With lxxx. ores at the fore staven.
Your maryners shall syng arowe
'Hey how and rumbylawe.'
Than shall ye, daughter, aske the wyne,
With spices that be good and fyne,
Gentyll pottes with genger grene,
With dates and deynties you betwene.
Forty torches brenyng bryght,
At your brydges to brynge you lyght.
Into your chambre they shall you brynge
With muche myrthe and more lykyng.
Your costordes covered with whyte & blewe,
And dyapred with lylés newe.
Your curtaines of camaca all in folde,
Your felyoles all of golde.
Your tester pery at your heed,
Curtaines with popiniayes white & reed.
Your hillynges with furres of armyne,
Powdred with golde of hew full fyne.
Your blankettes shall be of fustyane,
Your shetes shall be of clothe of rayne.
Your head shete shall be of pery pyght,
With dyamondes set and rubyes bryght.
Whan you are layde in bedde so softe,
A cage of golde shall hange a lofte,
With longe peper fayre burnning,
And cloves that be swete smellyng,

Frankensence and olibanum,
 That whan ye slepe the taste may come.
 And yf ye no rest may take,
 All night minstrelles for you shall wake.
 'Gramercy, father, so mote I the,
 For all these thinges lyketh not me.'
 Unto her chambre she is gone,
 And fell in sownyng sone anone,
 With much sorow and sighing sore,
 Yet seven yeare she kept hym thore.

text of COPLAND (1550-60) revised.

THOMAS OF ERCELDOUNE

There was a 'Thomas the Rhymer' of 'Erceldoune' in Scotland to whom was attributed the *Sir Tristrem* (edited by Sir Walter Scott) and of whom many wonders are told. He seems to have belonged to the thirteenth century, and therefore cannot be the author of the present delightful ballad-romance, which belongs to the beginning of the fifteenth. The poem is in three 'fyttes,' of which this is part of the first and best. (Thornton MS.)

Als I me went this endres day,
 Full fast in mynd makand my mone,
 In a mery mornynge of May,
 By Huntlee bankes myself allone,
 I herd the jay and the throstell;
 The mavys menyde hir in hir song;
 The wodewale beryde als a bell,
 That all the wode abowt me rong.
 Allone in longyng als I lay,
 Undyrneth a semely tree,
 Saw I whare a lady gay
 Came ridand over a luffy lee....
 Hir palfray was a dappill-gray—
 Swylk one ne sagh I never none.
 Als dose the sonne on someres day,
 That faire lady hirself scho schone.

endres, *other*
 beryde, *rang out*

menyde, *bemoaned*

wodewale, *yaffle* (?)

Hir selle it was of roell bone—
 Semely was that syght to see!—
 Stefly sett with precyous stone,
 And compast all with crapotee,
 With stones of Oryent, grete plente.
 Hir hare abowt hir hede it hang.
 Scho rade over that lufly lee;
 A whyl scho blew, another scho sang.
 Hir garthes of nobyll sylk thay were,
 The bukylls were of berel stone;
 Hir steraps were of crystal clere,
 And all with perel over bygone.
 Hir payetrel was of irale fyne;
 Hir cropour was of orpharë;
 Hir brydill was of golde fyne—
 One aythir syde hang bellys three....
 Thomas rathely up he rase,
 And ran over that mountayn hye;
 Gyff it be als the story says,
 He hir mette at Eldon tree.
 He knelyde down appon his knee,
 Undirnethe that grenwode spray:
 ‘Lufly lady, rewe on me,
 Qwene of heven, als thou wel may!’
 Than spake that lady milde of thoght:
 ‘Thomas, late swylke wordes be!
 Qwene of heven ne am I noght,
 For I tuke never so hegh degré;
 Bote I am of another countree,
 If I be payreld most of prýse.
 I ryde aftyr this wylde fee;
 My raches rynnys at my devyse.’...

selle, saddle roell bone, ivory crapotee, toadstone garthes, girths
 over bygone, bespread payetrel, horse's breastplate orphare, gold
 embroidery rathely, quickly Gyff, If rewe, have pity payreld,
 apparelled fee, quarry raches, hounds ['irale fyne' has not been
 satisfactorily explained]

'Lufly lady, rewe on mee,
 And I will evermore with the duelle;
 Here my trouth I plyght to the,
 Whethir thou will in heven or helle.'

'Man of molde, thou will me merre,
 Bot yit thou sall hafe all thy will;
 Bot trowe thou wele, thou chevys the werre,
 For alle my beaute thou will spyll.'

Down than lyghte that lady bryght,
 Undirnethe that grenewode spray;
 And, als the story tellis full ryght,
 Seven sythis by hir he lay....

Thomas stod up in that stede,
 And he byheld that lady gay:
 Hir hare it hang all over hir hede,
 Hir eghne semede out, that were so gray,

And all the rich clothynge was away,
 That he byfore saw in that stede;
 Hir a schanke blake, hir other gray,
 And all hir body lyke the lede.

Than said Thomas: 'Allas, allas!
 In fayth, this es a dullfull syght!
 How art thou fadyd in the face,
 That schan byfore als the sonne so bryght!'

Sche sayd: 'Thomas, take leve at sonne and mone,
 And als at lefe that grewes on tree;
 This twelmonth sall thou with me gone,
 And medill-erthe sall thou not see.'

'Allas,' he sayd, 'and wa es mee!
 I trowe my dedis wyll wirk me care.
 My saule, Jesu, byteche I the,
 Whedirsomer my banes sall fare.'

duelle, <i>dwell</i>	merre, <i>mar</i>	chevys, <i>thrives</i>	werre, <i>worse</i>
sythis, <i>times</i>	stede, <i>place</i>	eghne, <i>eyes</i>	a schanke, <i>one leg</i>
als, <i>also</i>	medill-erthe, <i>middle-earth</i>	byteche, <i>commit</i>	lede, <i>lead</i>

Scho ledde hym in at Eldone Hill,
 Undirnethe a derne lee,
 Whare it was dirk als mydnyght myrk,
 And ever the water till his knee.

The montenans of dayes three,
 He herd bot swoghyng of the flode;
 At the laste he sayd: 'Full wa es mee!
 Almast I dye for fawte of fode.'

Scho lede hym intill a faire herbere,
 Whare frute was growand gret plentee;
 Pere and appill both rype thay were,
 The date, and als the damasee;

The fygge, and also the wyneberye;
 The nyghtgales byggande on thair nest,
 The papejoyes fast abowt gan flye,
 And throstylls sang—wolde hafe no rest.

He pressede to pull frute with his hand,
 Als man for fude that was nere faynt.
 Scho sayd: 'Thomas, thou late tham stand,
 Or ells the fende the will atteynt.

If thou it plokk, sothely to say,
 Thi saule gose to the fyr of helle;
 It commes never owte or Domesday,
 Bot ther in Payne ay for to duelle.'...

'Seese thou now yon faire way,
 That lygges over yon hegh mountayn?
 Yone es the waye to heven for ay,
 When synfull sawles are passede ther payn.

Seese thou now yon other way,
 That lygges lawe bynethe yon ryse?
 Yon es the way, the sothe to say,
 Unto the joye of Paradyse.

derne, <i>secret</i>	montenans, <i>amount</i>	swoghyng, <i>roaring</i>	fawte, <i>lack</i>
herbere, <i>orchard</i>	damasee, <i>damson</i>	wyneberye, <i>grape</i>	byggande,
<i>dwelling</i>	papejoyes, <i>parrots</i>	or, <i>ere</i>	ryse, <i>spray</i>

Seese thou yitt yon thirde way,
 That ligges undir yon grene playn?
 Yone es the way, with tene and tray
 Whare synfull saulis suffirris thair payn.
 Bot seese thou now yone ferthe way,
 That lygges over yon depe delle?
 Yone es the way—so waylaway!—
 Unto the birnand fyr of helle.
 Seese thou yitt yone faire castell,
 That standis over yon heghe hill?
 Of towne and towre it beris the bell;
 In erthe es none lyke thertill.'...
 'When thou commes to yone castell gay,
 I pray the curtase man to bee;
 And whatso any man to the say,
 Luke thou answere none bot mee.'...
 Thomas duellide in that solace
 More than I yow saye, pardie,
 Till on a day—so hafe I grace!—
 My lufly lady sayd to mee:
 'Buske the, Thomas, the buse agayn,
 For here thou may no lengar be;
 Hye the faste with myght and mayn;
 I sall the bryng till Eldone tree.'
 Thomas sayd than with hevy chere:
 'Lufly lady, now late me bee,
 For certaynly I hafe bene here
 Noght bot the space of dayes three.'
 'Forsothe, Thomas, als I the tell,
 Thou hase bene here thre yere and more,
 And langer here thou may noght duell;
 The skyll I sall the tell wharefore:
 To-morne of helle the foule fende
 Amang this folk will feche his fee;
 And thou art mekill man and hendé—
 I trow full wele he wil chese the.

tene, tears

skyll, reason

tray, trouble

mekill, mickle [large]

Buske, Prepare

buse, behoves

For all the gold that ever may bee
 Fro hethyn unto the worldis ende,
 Thou bese never betrayed for mee;
 Therefore with me I rede thou wende.'

Scho broght hym agayn to Eldone tree,
 Undirneth that grenewode spray.—
 In Huntlee bankes es mery to bee,
 Whare fowles synges both nyght and day.

The Romance and Prophecies of Thomas of Erceldoune, edited by J. A. H. MURRAY, LL.D. (E.E.T.S. 61). Text as revised by A. S. COOK.

hethyn, hence rede, advise

THE THREE MATTERS

The lines of Jean Bodel quoted on p. 245 are rarely seen in their context.
 The reader may therefore like to know how this *trouvère* began his *Chanson*:

Qui d oir et d'antandre a loisir et talant
 Face pais, si escout bone chançon vaillant
 Don li livre d'estoire sont tesmoing et garant.
 Jà nuls vilains jugleres de ceste ne se vant,
 Qar il n'an sauroit dire ne les vers ne le chant.
 Ne sont que .ij. matières à nul home antendant:
 De France et de Bretaigne et de Rome la grant;
 Et de ces .ij. matieres n'i a nule samblant.
 Li conte de Bretaigne sont si vain et plaisant;
 Cil de Rome sont sage et de san aprenant;
 Cil de France de voir chascun jor apparant:
 La corone de France doit estre mise avant,
 Qar tuit autre roi doivent estre à lui apandant
 De la loi crestienne qi an Deu sont creant.
 Le premier roi de France fist Dex par son command
 Coroner à ses anges dignement an chantant;
 Puis le commanda estre an terre son sergent,
 Tenir droite justise et la loi metre avant.
 Cest commandement tindrent après lui li auqant:
 Anséys et Pepins, cil furent conquerant,
 Et Charlemaigne d'Aiz, qui Dex parama tant.

text of FRANCISQUE MICHEL, Paris, 1839.

THE ALLITERATIVE REVIVAL

WILLIAM OF PALERNE

C. H. E. L. I. 281, 286, 291-292, 316, 378. The remarkable revival or emergence of alliterative verse during the fourteenth century has already been noticed. The apparition of an ancient form in verse of newer mould has a strange and almost disquieting effect—‘es Klang so alt, und war doch so neu,’ as Hans Sachs says of Walter’s Spring Song. Certainly, in comparison with the jog-trot narrative of (say) *Sir Libeaus* or *Sir Percyvelle*, the best alliterative verse has extraordinary grip and power. ‘But this revival or reappearance has no effect on the main current of English verse; which continues to be distinctly metrical, to be, in effect universally, rimed and to use alliteration only for a separable and casual ornament, not as a constituent and property.’ One of the earliest (but not the best) of poems in the revived form is *William of Palerne* or *William and the Werewolf*, translated from the French about 1350. It occurs in a unique MS at Cambridge. The following extract shows it at its best. The heir to the Spanish throne is changed by his stepmother into a werewolf. In that form he carries off and protects William, the young prince of Palermo, whom he hides in his forest den.

Hit bi-fel in that forest there fast by-side,
ther woned a wel old cherl that was a couherde,
that fele winterres in that forest fayre had kepud
Mennes ken of the cuntry as a comen herde;
& thus it bitide that time as tellen oure bokes,
this cowherd comes on a time to kepen is bestes
Fast by-side the borw there the barn was inne.
the herd had with him an hound his hert to light,
forto bayte on his bestes wanne thai to brode went.
the herd sat than with hound ayene the hote sunne,
Nought fully a furlong fro that fayre child,
cloughtand kyndely his schon as to here craft falles.
that while was the werwolf went a-boute his praye,
what behoved to the barn to bring as he might.

wонед, *dwelt* *fele, many* *ken, kine* *borw, shelter* *barn, child*
to light, *to lighten* *bayte on, set on* *cloughtand, cobbling* *kyndely, naturally*

the child than darked in his den dernly him one,
 & was a big bold barn & breme of his age,
 For spakly speke it couthe tho & spedeliche to-wawe.
 Lovely lay it a-long in his lonely denne,
 & buskede him out of the buschys that were blowed grene,
 & leved ful lovely that lent grete schade,
 & briddes ful bremely on the bowes singe.
 what for melodye that thei made in the mey sesoun,
 that litel child listely lorked out of his cave,
 Faire floures forto fecche that he bi-fore him seye,
 & to gadere of the grases that grene were & fayre.
 & whan it was out went so wel hit him liked,
 the savor of the swete sesoun & song of the briddes,
 that he ferde fast a-boute floures to gadere,
 & layked him long while to listen that merthe.
 the couherdes hound that time as happe by-tidde,
 feld foute of the child and fast thider fulwes;
 & sone as he it seigh sothe forto telle,
 he gan to berke on that barn and to baie it hold,
 that it wax neigh of his witt, wod for fere,
 and comsed than to crye so kenly and schille,
 & wepte so wonder fast, wite thou for sothe,
 that the son of the cry com to the cowherde evene,
 that he wist witerly it was the voys of a childe.
 than ros he up radely & ran thider swithe,
 & drow him toward the den by his dogges noyce.
 bi that time was the barn for bere of that hounde,
 drawe him in to his den & darked ther stille,
 & wept evere as it wolde a-wede for fere;
 & evere the dogge at the hole held it at a-baye.
 & whan the kouherd com thidere he koured lowe
 to bi-hold in at the hole whi his hound berkyd.
 thanne of-saw he ful sone that semliche child,
 that so loveliche lay & wep in that lothli cave,

*darked, lay hid dernly him one, secretly alone breme, strong spakly,
 wisely to-wawe, crawl about buskede, hurried lent, gave bremely,
 strongly listely, shily lorked, lurked ferde, fared layked, played
 feld foute, detected scent fulwes, follows sothe, truth to baie, at bay
 neigh of, out of wod, mad comsed, commenced wite thou, know thou
 witerly, certainly radely, quickly swithe, soon bere, noise a-wede, go mad
 koured lowe, bent down of-saw, perceived semliche, comely*

clothed ful komly for ani kud kinges sone,
 In gode clothes of gold a-grethed ful riche,
 with perrey & pellure pertelyche to the righttes.
 the cherl wondred of that chaunce & chastised his dogge,
 bad him blinne of his berking & to the barn talked,
 acoyed it to come to him & clepud hit oft,
 & foded it with floures & with faire by-hest,
 & hight it hastily to have what it wold yerne,
 appeles & alle thinges that childern after wilnen.
 so, forto seigh al the sothe so faire the cherl glosed,
 that the child com of the cave & his criyng stint.
 the cherl ful cherli that child tok in his armes,
 & kest hit & clipped and oft crist thonkes,
 that hade him sent tho sonde swiche prey to finde.
 wightliche with the child he went to his house,
 and bi-tok it to his wif tightly to kepe.
 a gladere wommon under god no might go on erthe,
 than was the wif with the child, witow for sothe.
 sche kolled it ful kindly and askes is name,
 & it answered ful sone & seide, ‘william y hight.’
 than was the godwif glad and gan it faire kepe,
 that it wanted nought that it wold have,
 that thei ne fond him as faire as for here state longed,
 & the beter, be ye sure, for barn ne had thei none
 brought forth of here bodies; here bale was the more.
 but sothly thai seide the child schuld weld al here godis,
 Londes & ludes as eyer after here lif dawes.
 but from the cherl & the child now chaunge we oure tale,
 For i wol of the werwolf a wile now speke.

William of Palerne, edited by Sir FREDERIC
 MADDEN (Roxburghe Club); revised by
 W. W. SKEAT (E.E.T.S., Extra Series, 1).

kud, known (*famous*) a-grethed, arrayed perrey, jewelry pellure, fur
 pertelyche, evidently righttes, rightly blinne, cease acoyed, coaxed
 clepud, called foded, tempted hight, promised yerne, desire glosed,
 spoke smoothly stint, stopped cherli, fondly clipped, embraced sonde, gift
 wightliche, quickly witow, know thou kolled, hugged fond him,
 provided for him here, their here bale, their sorrow weld, possess
 ludes, holdings eyer, heir dawes, days

MORTE ARTHURE

C. H. E. L. I. 281, 284, 333. This poem occurs only in the Thornton MS. It has been attributed to Huchown of the Awle Ryale, but the authorship cannot be clearly established. Under the guise of a poem derived from Geoffrey it really has reference to contemporary history and the wars of Edward III. ‘This touch of allegory, which one need not be afraid to compare with the purpose of the *Aeneid* or of *The Faerie Queene*, makes it unlike most other medieval romances.’ The poem contains nearly 4500 lines in the north-west midland dialect. The passage below begins at l. 3230. The king is describing a dream that has greatly distressed him.

Me thoughte I was in a wode willed myne one,
 That I ne wiste no waye whedire that I scholde,
 ffore wolvez, and whilde swynne, and wykkyde bestez
 Walkede in that wasterne, wathes to seche;
 Thare lyouns fulle lothely lykkyde theire tuskes,
 Alle fore lapynge of blude of my lele knyghtez!
 Thurghe that foreste I flede, thare floures whare heghe,
 ffor to fele me for ferde of tha foule thynges;
 Merkede to a medowe with montayngnes enclosyde,
 The meryeste of medillerthe that mene myghte be-holde!
 The close was in compas castyne alle abowte,
 With claver and clerewortre clede evene over;
 The vale was enverownde with vynes of silver,
 Alle with grapis of golde, gretter ware never,
 Enhorilde with arborye and alkyns trees,
 Erberis fulle honeste, and hyrdez there-undyre;
 Alle froytez foddenid was that floreschede in erthe,
 ffaire frithed in frownke appone tha free bowes;
 Whas thare no downkyng of dewe that oghte dere scholde,
 With the drowghte of the daye alle drye ware the flores!

Than discendis in the dale, downe fra the clowddez,
 A duches dereworthily dyghte in dyaperde wedis,

willed myne one, strayed alone wasterne, wilderness wathes, prey
 whare heghe, were high fele, hide ferde, fear Merkede, I went
 meryeste, loveliest medillerthe, middle-earth (the world) close, enclosure
 castyne, encircled claver, clover clerewortre, small clover enverownde,
 environed Enhorilde, Surrounded arborye, shrubs alkyns, all kinds of
 Erberis, Gardens hyrdez, shepherds froytez, fruits foddenid, produced
 frithed, flourished frownke, enclosure dewe, moisture oghte dere, any harm

In a surcott of sylke fulle selkouthely hewedē,
 Alle with loyotour over-laide lowe to the hemmes,
 And with ladily lappes the lenghe of a yerde,
 And alle redily reversside with rebanes of golde,
 With bruchez and besauntez, and other bryghte stonyz,
 Hir bake and hir breste was brochede alle over,
 With kelle and with corenalles clenliche arrayede,
 And that so comly of colour one knowene was never!
 A-bowte cho whirllide a whele with hir whitte hondez,
 Over-whelmde alle qwayntely the whele as cho scholde;
 The rowelle whas rede golde with ryalle stonyz,
 Raylide with reched and rubyes i-newe;
 The spekes was splentide alle with speltis of silver,
 The space of a spere lenghe springande fulle faire;
 There-one was a chayere of chalke-whyttē silver,
 And chekyrdē with charebocle chawngynge of hewes;
 Appone the compas ther clewide kyngis one rawe,
 With corowns of clere golde that krakede in sondire:
 Sex was of that setille fulle sodaynliche fallene,
 Ilke a segge by hymē selfe, and saide theis wordez,—
 ‘That ever I renged one thir rog, me rewes it ever!
 Was never roye so riche that regnede in erthe!
 Whene I rode in my rowte, roughe I noghte elles,
 Bot revaye, and revelle, and rawnsone the pople!
 And thus I drife forthe my dayes, whilles I dreghe myghte,
 And there-fore derflyche I am dampnede for ever!
 The laste was a litylle mane that laide was be-nethē,
 His leskes laye alle lene and latheliche to schewe,
 The lokkes lyarde and longe the lenghe of a yerde,
 His lire and his lyghame lamede fulle sore;
 The tone eye of the byeryne was brighttere thane silver,

selkouthely hewedē, *wondrouslī coloured* loyotour, *embroidery* ladily
 lappes, *lady-like folds* reversside, *turned back* bruchez, *brooches*
 besauntez, *bezants* brochede, *studded* kelle, *hair-net* corenalles, *crown*
 cho, *she* Over-whelmde, *overturn* qwayntely, *artfully* Raylide, *Covered*
 reched, *richness* speltis, *bars* charebocle, *carbuncles* compas, *rim*
 clewide, *clung* one rawe, *in a row* setille, *seat* Ilke a segge, *Each man*
 renged, *ranked* one, *on* rog, *rolling wheel (?)* rowte, *retinue* roughe, *recked*
 revaye, *hunting* rawnsone, *taxing* dreghe, *endure* derflyche, *grievously*
 laste, *lowest* (*Alexander*) leskes, *loins* lyarde, *gray* lire, *visage* lyghame,
body byeryne, *man*

The tother was yalowere thene the yolke of a naye.

‘I was lorde,’ quod the lede, ‘of londes i-newe,
And alle ledis me lowttede that lengede in erthe;
And nowe es lefte me no lappe my lygham to hele,
Bot lightly now ame I loste, leve iche mane the sothe!’

The secunde sir for-sothe that sewede theme aftyre,
Was sekerare to my sighte, and saddare in armes;
Ofte he syghede un-sownde, and said theis wordes,—
‘On yone see hafe I sittene, als soverayne and lorde,
And ladys me lovede to lappe in theyre armes;
And nowe my lordchippes are loste, and laide for ever!’

The thirde thorowely was throo, and thikke in the
schuldrys,

A thra man to thrette of, there thretty ware gaderide;
His dyademe was droppedpe downe, dubbyde with stonyis,
Endente alle with diamawndis, and dighte for the nonis;
‘I was dredde in my dayes,’ he said, ‘in dyverse rewmies,
And now dampnede to the dede, and dole es the more!’

The fourte was a faire mane, and forsesy in armes,
The fayreste of fegure that fourmede was ever!
‘I was frekke in my faithe,’ he said, ‘whilles I one fowlde
regnede,

ffamows in fferre londis, and floure of alle kynges;
Now es my face defadide, and foule es me hapnede,
ffor I am fallene fro ferre, and frendles by-levyde!’

The fifte was a faire mane thane fele of thies other,
A fforsesy mane and a ferge, with fomand lippis;
He fongede faste one the feleyghes, and faylded his armes,
Bot yit he failede and felle a fyfty fote large;
Bot yit he sprange and sprengle, and spraddene his armes,
And one the spere-lenghe spekes, he spekes thire wordes—
‘I was in Surrye a syr, and sett be myne one,
As soverayne and seyngnour of sere kynges londis;

a naye, *an aye* (egg) lede, man ledis, men lowttede, bowed lappe, rag
sewed, followed (*Hector*) sekerare, trustier un-sownde, softly
yone see, yon seat thorowely, truly throo, mighty (*Caesar*) thra,
fierce thrette, dare thretty, thirty Endente, Inlaid dighte, decked
nonis, occasion forsesy, powerful (*Judas Maccabeus*) frekke, strong
one fowlde, on earth by-levyde, left faire, fairer fele, many (*Joshua*)
fongede, clung feleyghes, fellies faylded, clasped sprengle, leaped
Surrye, Assyria syr, lord sere, many

Now of my solace I am fulle sodanly fallene,
And for sake of my syne, yone sete es me revede!'

The sexte hade a sawtere semliche bowndene,
With a surepel of silke sewede fulle faire,
A harpe and a hande-slynge with harde flynte stones;
What harmes he has hente he halowes fulle sone,—
'I was demede in my dayes,' he said, 'of dedis of armes
One of the doughtyeste that duelled in erthe;
Bot I was merride one molde in my moste strengththis,
With this maydene so mylde, that mofes us alle.'

Two kynges ware clymbande, and claverande one heghe,
The creste of the compas they covette fulle yerne;
'This chaire of charbokle,' they said, 'we chalange here-aftyre,
As two of the cheffeste chosene in erthe!'
The childire ware chalke-whitte, chekys and other,
Bot the chayere a-bownne chevede they never:
The forthirmaste was freely, with a frount large,
The faireste of fyssnamy that fourmede was ever;
And he was buskede in a blee of a blewe noble,
With flourdelice of golde floreschede al over;
The tother was cledde in a cote alle of clene silver,
With a comliche crosse corvene of golde,
ffowre crosselettes krafty by the crosse ristes,
And ther-by knewe I the kynge, that crystnede hymsemyde.

Thane I went to that wlonke, and wynly hire gretis,
And cho said, 'welcome i-wis! wele arte thou fowndene;
The aughte to wirchipe my wille, and thou wele cowthe,
Of alle the valyant men that ever was in erthe;
ffore alle thy wirchipe in werre by me has thou wonnene,
I hafe bene frendely, freke, and fremmude tille other;
That has thou fowndene in faithe, and fele of thi biernez,
ffore I fellid downe sir Frolle with frowarde knyghtes;
ffore-thi the fruytes of Fraunce are freely thynne awene.

yone, yon revede, reft sawtere, psalter bowndene, bound (*David*)
surepel, surplice hente, received halowes, calls merride one molde,
marred on earth claverande, clinging creste, rim yerne, anxiously
childire, men a-bownne, above chevede, achieved freely, noble
frount, forehead (*Charlemagne*) fyssnamy, visage buskede, clad blee,
colour The tother (*Godfrey of Bouillon*) krafty, skilfully ristes, rests
wlonke, fair one wynly, pleasantly fowndene, met and, if cowthe,
understood werre, war fremmude, strange (*unkind*) fele, many biernez, men

Thow sall the chayere escheve, I chese the my selfene,
 Be-fore alle the cheftaynes chose in this erthe.'
 Scho lifte me up lightly with hir lene hondes,
 And sette me softly in the see, the septre me rechede;
 Craftely with a kambe cho kembede myne hevede,
 That the krispane kroke to my crownne raughte;
 Dressid one me a diademe, that dighte was fulle faire,
 And syne profres me a pome pighte fulle of faire stonye,
 Enamelde with azoure, the erth there-one depayntide,
 Serkyld with the salte see appone sere halves,
 In sygne that I sothely was soverayne in erthe.

Than broght cho me a brande with fulle bryghte hiltes,
 And bade me brawndysche the blade, 'the brande es myne awene:
 Many swayne with the swynge has the swette levede;
 ffor whilles thow swanke with the swerde, it swykketh the
 never.'

Than raykes cho with roo, and riste whene hir likede,
 To the ryndes of the wode, richere was never;
 Was no pomarie so pighte of pryncez in erthe,
 Ne nonne apparaylle so prowde, bot paradys one.
 Scho bad the bewes scholde bewe downe, and bryng to my hondes
 Of the beste that they bare one brawnches so heghe;
 Than they heldede to hir heste alle holly at ones,
 The hegheste of iche a hirste, I hette yow for-sothe:
 Scho bade me fyrthe noghte the fruyte, bot fonde whilles me
 likede,

'ffonde of the fyneste, thow freliche byerne,
 And reche to the ripeste, and ryotte thy selvene!
 Riste, thow ryalle roye, for Rome es thyne awene!
 And I sall redily rolle the roo at the gayneste,
 And reche the the riche wyne in rynsede coupes.'
 Thane cho wente to the welle by the wode enis,
 That alle wellyde of wyne, and wondirliche rynnes;
 Kaughte up a copp fulle, and coverde it faire;

*escheve, achieve kambe, comb krispane kroke, crisp curl pome, royal orb
 Serkyld, Circled sere, separate swette levede, life lost swanke, toil
 swykketh, fails raykes, goes roo, wheel ryndes, trees pomarie, orchard
 one, alone bewes, boughs bewe, bow heldede, yielded heste, command
 a hirste, in the wood hette, tell fyrthe, spare fonde, try, seek
 freliche byerne, noble lord ryotte, enjoy Riste, Rest gayneste, nearest
 rynsede, clean enis, ways*

Scho bad me dereliche drawe, and drynke to hir selfene.
 And thus cho lede me abowte the lenghe of an owre,
 With alle likynge and luffe, that any lede scholde;
 Bot at the myddaye fulle ewyne alle hir mode chaungede,
 And mad myche manace with mervayllous wordez;
 Whene I cryede appone hire, cho kest downe hir browes:
 'Kyng, thow karpes for noghte, be Criste that me made!
 ffor thow sall lose this layke, and thi lyfe aftyre,
 Thow has lyffede in delytte and lordchippes inewe!'

Abowte scho whirles the whele, and whirles me undire,
 Tille alle my qwarters that whille whare qwaste al to peces!
 And with that chayere my chyne was chopped in sondire!
 And I hafe cheveride for chele, sen me this chance happenede.
 Than wakkenyde I iwys, alle wery for-dremyde;
 And now wate thow my woo, worde as the lykes.

Morte Arthure, edited by EDMUND BROCK (Early English Text Society, 8).

ewyne, straightway	karpes, crieſt	layke, game	inewe, enough
qwaste, crushed	chyne, backbone	cheveride, shivered	chele, cold
sen, since	wate, tell		

THE PEARL

C. H. E. L. 1. 320–334. In the British Museum is a short thick MS volume (Cotton Nero A x) containing (with some alien matter) four poems without titles or hint of authorship. They are generally known as *Pearl*, *Patience*, *Purity* (or *Cleanness*) and *Syr Gawayne and the Grene Knight*. The manuscript is written in small sharp characters with pale faded ink, varied here and there by larger initial letters in blue and red and adorned by a few pages of pictures, rough, inadequate, and almost like a child's attempts at drawing and colouring—certainly nothing like the superbly executed flourishes of conventional illumination. 'No single line of these poems has been discovered in any other manuscript.' They have been claimed for Huchown, but the attribution cannot be decisively established. Whoever he was, the Nameless Poet ranks high among English writers as a 'lord of language' and as a singer of noble themes. In his simple faith and clear sense of religious verity combined with a loving elaboration of detail, he may be compared with the Van Eycks and Memlinc and the anonymous Masters of primitive Flemish painting. *The Pearl*, a poem of 1212 lines, is an allegory of a dead child—no doubt named Margaret. This precious Pearl has been lost in the ground and the stricken loser wanders in sorrowful search:

To that spot that I in speche expoun,
 I entred in that erber grene,

In Augoste in a hygh seysoun,
 Quen corne is corven wyth crokes kene.
 On huyle ther perle hit trendeled doun
 Schadowed this wortes ful schyre & schene,—
 Gilofre, gyngure, & gromylyoun,
 & pyonys powdered ay by-twene.

Yif hit was semly on to sene,
 A fayr reflayr yet fro hit flot,
 Ther wonys that worthyly, I wot & wene,
 My precious perle wyth-outen spot....

Fro spot my spyryt ther sprang in space,
 My body on balke ther bod in sweven;
 My geste is gon in Godes grace
 In aventure ther mervayles meven.
 I ne wyste in this worlde quere that hit wace,
 Bot I knew me keste ther klyfes cleven;
 To-warde a foreste I bere the face,
 Where ryche rokkes wer to dyscreven;
 The lyght of hem myght no mon leven,
 The glemande glory that of hem glent;
 For wern never webbes that wyghes weven
 Of half so dere adubbemente.

Dubbed wern alle tho downes sydes
 Wyth crystal klyffes so cler of kynde;
 Holte-wodes bryght aboute hem bydes,
 Of bolles as blwe as ble of ynde;
 As bornyst sylver the lef onslides,
 That thike con trylle on uch a tynde;
 Quen glem of glodes agayns hem glydes,
 Wyth schymeryng schene ful schrylle thay schynde;
 The gravayl that I on grunde con grynde
 Wern precious perles of Oryente;
 The sunne-bemes bot blo & blynde
 In respecte of that adubbement.

The adubbemente of tho downes dere
 Garten my geste al greffe for-yete;
 So frech flavores of frytes were,
 As fode hit con me fayre refete;

Fowles ther floweren in fryth in fere,
 Of flaumbande hwes, bothe smale & grete;
 Bot sytole-stryng & gyternere
 Her reken myrthe moght not retrete;
 For quen those bryddes her wynges bete,
 Thay songen wyth a swete asent;
 So gracios gle couthe no mon gete
 As here & se her adubbement....

[He wanders on till he has ‘won to a water through shores that sheareth,’ beyond which lay loveliness inexpressible—and the figure of a maiden.]

More mervayle con my dom adaunt;
 I segh byyonde that myry mere
 A crystal clyffe ful relusaunt;
 Mony ryal ray con fro hit rere.
 At the fote ther-of ther sete a faunt,
 A mayden of menske, ful debonere;
 Blysnande whyt was hyr bleaunt;
 I knew hyr wel, I hade sen hyr ere.
 As glysande golde that man con schere,
 So schon that schene an-under schore;
 On lenghe I loked to hyr there;
 The lenger, I knew hyr more & more.

The more I frayste hyr fayre face,
 Her fygure fyn quen I had fonte,
 Suche gladande glory con to me glace
 As lyttel byfore therto was wonte.
 To calle hyr lyste con me enchace,
 Bot baysment gef myn hert a brunt;
 I segh hyr in so strange a place,
 Such a burre myght make myn herte blunt.

Thenne veres ho up her fayre frount,
 Hyr vysayge whyt as playn yvore,
 That stonge myn hert, ful stray astount,
 & ever the lenger, the more & more.

More then me lyste my drede aros;
 I stod ful styll & dorste not calle;
 Wyth yghen open & mouth ful clos,
 I stod as hende as hawk in halle.

I hoped that gostly was that porpose;
 I dred on-ende quat schulde byfalle,
 Lest ho me eschaped that I ther chos,
 Er I at steven hir moght stalle.

That gracios gay wyth-outen galle,
 So smothe, so smal, so seme slyght,
 Ryses up in hir araye ryalle,
 A precios pyece in perles pyghe.

Perles pyghe of ryal prys
 There moght mon by grace haf sene,
 Quen that frech as flor-de-lys
 Doun the bonke con boghe by-dene.
 Al blysnande whyt wats hir beau mys,
 Upon at sydes, & bounden bene
 Wyth the myryeste margarys, at my devyse,
 That ever I segh yet with myn ene;

Wyth lappes large, I wot & I wene,
 Dubbed with double perle & dyghte;
 Her cortel of self sute schene,
 Wyth precios perles al umbe-pyghe.

A pyght coroune yet wer that gyrtle,
 Of mariorys & non other ston,
 Highe pynakled of cler quyt perle,
 Wyth flurted flowres perfet upon.
 To hed hade ho non other werle;
 Her here heke al hyr umbe-gon;
 Her semblaunt sade, for doc other erle;
 Her ble more blaght then whalles bon.

As schorne golde schyr her fax thenne schon,
 On schylderes that leghe unlapped lyghte;
 Her depe colour yet wonted non
 Of precios perle in porfyl pyghe.

Pyght was poyned & uche a hemme,
 At honde, at sydes, at overture,
 Wyth whyte perle & non other gemme,
 & bornyste quyte was hyr vesture;
 Bot a wonder perle, wyth-outen wemme,
 In myddes hyr breste was sette so sure;

A mannes dom moght dryghly demme,
Er mynde moght malte in hit mesure.

I hope no tonge moght endure
No saverly saghe say of that syght,
So wats hit clene & cler & pure,
That precios perle ther hit was pyght.

Pyght in perle, that precios pyece
On wyther half water com doun the schore;
No gladder gome hethen in-to Grece,
Then I, quen ho on brymme wore;
Ho was me nerre then aunte or nece;
My joy for-thy was much the more.
Ho profered me speche, that special spece,
Enclynande lowe in wommon lore;
Caghte of her coroun of grete tresore,
& haylsed me wyth a late lyghte.
Wel was me that ever I was bore,
To sware that swete in perles pyghe.

‘O Perle,’ quoth I, ‘in perles pyght,
Art thou my perle that I haf playned,
Regretted by myn one, on nyghte?
Much longeyng haf I for the layned,
Sythen into gresse thou me aglyghte;
Pensyf, payred, I am for-payned,
& thou in a lyf of lykyng lyghte
In Paradys erde, of stryf unstrayned.
What wyrde has hyder my iuel wayned,
& don me in thys del & gret daunger?
Fro we in twynne wern towen & twayned,
I haf ben a joyles juelere.’...

[The maiden rebukes his grief and his want of faith in the goodness of God. She describes the happiness of the blest virgins all equal in heritage of heaven, with Mary, ‘Makeles Moder & myryest May’ as ‘Quen of cortaysye’ holding empire of them all full high. He beseeches her to show him the city of their bliss.]

As John the apostel hit sygh wyth syght,
I syghe that cyty of gret renoun,
Jerusalem so nwe & ryally dyght,
As hit was lyght fro the heven adoun.

The borgh was al of brende golde bryght,
 As glemande glas burnist broun,
 Wyth gentyl gemmes an-under pyght,
 Wyth banteles twelve on basyng boun;
 The foundementes twelve of riche tenoun;
 Uch tabelment was a serlypes ston;
 As derely devyses this ilk toun
 In Apocalyppe the apostel John.

As John thise stones in writ con nemme,
 I knew the names after his tale.
 Jasper hyght the fyrste gemme,
 That I on the fyrste basse con wale;
 He glente grene in the lowest hemme;
 Saffer helde the secounde stale;
 The calsydoyne thenne wyth-outen wemme
 In the thrydde table con purly pale;
 The emerade the furthe so grene of scale;
 The sardonyse the fyfthe ston;
 The sexte the sarde; he con hit wale,
 In the Apocalyppe, the apostel John.

Yet joyned John the crysolyt,
 The seventhe gemme in fundament;
 The aghthe the beryl cler & quyt;
 The topasye twynne-how the nente endent;
 The crysopase the tenthe is tyght;
 The jacynght the enleventhe gent;
 The twelfthe, the tryeste in uch a plyt,
 The amatyst purpre wyth ynde blente.

The wal abof the bantels brent,
 O jasporye as glas that glynande schon,—
 I knew hit by his devysement
 In the Apocalyppe, the apostel John.

As John devyseth sagh I thare,—
 Thise twelve de-gres wern brode & stayre;
 The cyte stod abof ful sware,
 As longe as brode as hyghe ful fayre;
 The stretes of golde as glasse al bare;
 The wal of jasper that glent as glayre;

The wones wyth-inne enurned ware
 Wyth alle kynnes perre that moght repayre.
 Thenne helde uch sware of this manayre
 Twelve thowsande forlonge er ever hit fon,
 Of heght, of brede, of lenthe, to cayre;
 For meten hit sygh the apostel John....

Of sunne ne mone had thay no nede;
 The selfe God was her lompe-lyght,
 The Lombe her lantyrne wyth-outen drede;
 Thurgh hym blysned the borgh al bryght.
 Thurgh woghe & won my lokyng yede,
 For sotyle cler noght lette no syght;
 The hyghe trone ther moght ye hede
 Wyth alle the apparaylmente umbe-pyghe,
 As John the apostel in termes tyghte;
 The hyghe Godes self hit set upone;
 A rever of the trone ther ran out-ryghe
 Wats bryghter then bothe the sunne & mone....

Ryght as the maynful mone con rys,
 Er thenne the day-glem dryve al doun,
 So sodanly on a wonder wyse,
 I wats war of a prosessyoun.
 This noble cite of ryche enpryse
 Was sodanly ful, wyth-outen sommoun,
 Of such vergynes in the same gyse
 That was my blysful an-under croun;
 & coronde wern alle of the same fasoun,
 Depaynt in perles & wedes qwyte;
 In uchones breste wats bounden boun
 The blysful perle wyth gret delyt.

Wyth gret delyt thay glod in fere
 On golden gates that glent as glasse;
 Hundreth thowsandes I wot ther were,
 & alle in sute her livre wasse;
 Tor to knaw the gladdest chere.
 The Lombe byfore con proudly passe,
 Wyth hornes seven of red golde cler;
 As praysed perles his wede wasse.

Towarde the throne thay trone a tras;
 Thagh thay wern fele, no pres in plyt;
 Bot mylde as maydenes seme at mas,
 So drogh thay forth wyth gret delyt....

[And then he awakes from that dream of bliss and finds himself once more on the hillside alone.]

Me payed ful ille to be out-fleme
 So sodenly of that fayre regioun,
 Fro alle tho syghtes so quyke & queme.
 A longeyng hevy me strok in swone,
 & rewfully thenne I con to reme:
 'O Perle,' quoth I, 'of rych renoun,
 So was hit me dere that thou con deme
 In thy veray avysoun!
 If hit be veray & soth sermoun,
 That thou so strykes in garande gay,
 So wel is me in thys doel-doungoun,
 That thou art to that Prynses paye.'...

Pearl, text edited by Sir ISRAEL GOLLANZCZ, Litt.D.

Instead of a gloss a modernised version is given.

To that sweet spot of sad renown
 I entered, to that arbour green,
 In August, at the summer's crown,
 When corn is cut with sickles keen.
 The earth where once my Pearl rolled down
 Was shadowed with herbs full clear and sheen,
 Gillyflower, ginger and gromelion,
 And peonies powdered all between.
 But, fair and seemly as was that scene,
 Fairer the fragrance that floated away
 From the dwelling where gloweth in glory,
 ween,
 That spotless Pearl that was mine one day....

Thence sprang my spirit forth in space,
 While my body lay in earth-bound dream:
 My ghost is gone in Goddes grace
 To venture where strange marvels teem:

I wist not where in the world it was,
 But I found myself where steep cliffs gleam
 Towards a forest I bent my face,
 Where rocks so radiant rich were seen
 No eye might bear their dazzling beam,
 Or the gleaming glory that from them glent.
 No blazon'd tapestry e'er did seem
 So fair as this sight that God me sent.

High crown'd is all that steep hillside
 With crystal cliffs so steep of kind!
 Fair woods and holts about them bide
 With stems as blue as blue of Ind,
 And beams of burnished silver slide
 O'er trembling leaf and mossy rind.
 When gleam of glades did o'er them glide,
 With shimmering sheen full sharp they shined.
 A gravel on the ground did grind
 Of precious pearls of orient:
 The sun's own sheen was pale and blind
 Before that sight that God me sent.

The sight of that hillside so clear
 Taught my sad soul all grief forget;
 Such flavours fresh of fruits there were,
 The thought thereof doth stay me yet;
 Fowls fluttered fearless here and there,
 Of flaming hues, both small and great.
 No zithern-string or dulcimer
 Could half their jocund mirth repeat:
 For, when those birds their bright wings beat,
 They sang with such a sweet consent,
 So gracious glee could no man get
 As this sweet sight that God me sent....

More marvels now my soul beguiled;
 I saw, beyond that merry mere,
 Bright crystal cliffs on bright cliffs piled,
 Radiant with rays that have no peer:
 At which cliff's foot there sat a child,
 A gracious maid, full debonnair:

Her dazzling robe was undefiled;
I knew her well, I had seen her ere.
As glistening gold, pure and sincere,
So shone she on that shining shore:
Long gazed I eagerly on her there;
The longer, I knew her more and more.

The more I gazed on her fair face,
And saw her make so sweet a show,
The more I felt such gladdening grace
As seldom had been mine ere now.
I yearned to call her, but, alas!
Amazement dealt my heart a blow
To see her in so strange a place,
And made my reason bend and bow.

When lo! she raised her ivory brow,
That such a look of sweetness wore,
As stung my heart with numbing woe,
And ever the longer the more and more.

More than my yearning my dread arose,
I bode stock still and dared not call,
With eyes wide open and mouth full close,
I stood as tame as hawk in hall.
Ghostly methinks was that purpose,
Yet I feared lest it might at last befall
That the prize might escape me which there I chose
Ere I could make it mine withal—

That gracious prize so free from gall,
So smooth, so slender, so seemly slight,
Rising up in array royal
A precious Piece with pearls bedight.

Choicest pearls of royal price,
There might man by grace have seen,
While, fair and fresh as fleur-de-lys,
She wandered down that limpid stream;
All glistening white her tunic is,
Open at sides, and bound between
With marguerites, I well devise,
Of purest ray and most serene;

Her sleeves were loose and large, I ween,
 Inwrought with double gems so white;
 Her kirtle was of self-suit sheen,
 With precious pearls around bedight.

A subtle crown yet wore that girl
 Of marguerites and no other stone,
 High pinnacled with clear white pearl,
 With fretted flowerets thereon;
 Nought else upon her hair's fair curl,
 Which hung in locks her neck adown:
 Her look was grave as duke or earl,
 Her hue more white than walrus-bone,
 As gold refined her tresses shone,
 That on her shoulders lay loose and light;
 Their deep colour yet needed none
 Of the precious pearls that her robe bedight.

Bedight and broidered was each hem,
 At hands, at sides, at overture,
 With white pearl and none other gem;
 And burnished white was her vesture.
 But a wondrous pearl withouten wem
 In her mid breast was set so sure,
 No stone in royal diadem
 In price with that jewel might measure.
 Methinks no tongue might e'er endure
 To tell the glory of that sight,
 So was it bright and clear and pure,
 That precious pearl that her breast bedight!

Bedight with pearls, that precious Piece
 Beyond the stream came down the shore;
 No gladder man was 'twixt here and Greece
 Than I, when she came me before;
 She was nearer to me than aunt or niece,
 And therefore was my joy the more.
 Then that rare maiden proffered me speech
 Inclining woman-like me before,
 She doffed her crown of rich tresore
 And hailed me with a voice so light,

Well was me that I ever was bore
To answer that Sweet, with pearls bedight.

'O Pearl,' quoth I, 'with pearls bedight,
Art thou my Pearl that I have plained,
With yearnings through the long lone night
And bitter tears in secret rained!
Since earth received thee from my sight,
Pensive, forlorn, I am for-pained,
While thou art ever glad and bright
In Paradise, of strife unstrained.

What weird hath brought hither the gem of my
heart,
And set me in dole and great danger?
Since we two were sundered and set apart,
I have been a joyless jeweller.'...

Even as it met the Apostle's sight,
Saw I that city of great renown,
The New Jerusalem, royally dight
As it was let from heaven adown.
Its bulwarks burned with gold so bright,
As burnished glass that gleams around,
With noble gems all underpight,
And pillars twelve on their bases bound:
On twelve great slabs the Lord did found
Those walls, and each a precious stone;
As standeth written of this fair town
In Apocalypse of the Apostle John.

As John the stones in writ did name,
Knew I their name now by his tale.
Jasper hight the foremost gem,
For first foundation, nothing frail,
Gleaming green in the lowest hem:
Secondly, sapphire did I hail:
Chalcedony then withouten wem
In the third course shone pure and pale:
Emerald the fourth, so green of scale,
And fifth came sweet sardonyx stone:
The sixth was ruby, after the tale
Of Apocalypse by the Apostle John.

To these joined John the chrysolite
 As seventh gem in fundament:
 The eighth, the beryl clear and white:
 Next, twin-hued topaz excellent:
 Chrysoprase the tenth stone hight:
 The eleventh, jacinth rich and quaint:
 The twelfth, that burned with mellowest light,
 Was amethyst purple with azure blent.

The walls, that on this basement leant,
 Were jasper clear as glass that shone:
 I knew it by the devisément
 In Apocalypse of the Apostle John.

As John devised, so saw I there;
 These twelve degrees were steep and wide;
 The city stood above foursquare,
 And foursquare was each several side;
 Through streets of gold so glassy clear
 The jasper walls arose in pride:
 Within, the dwellings garnished were
 With stones that earthly gems outvied.

Twelve thousand furlongs I well descried
 The measure of this heavenly town;
 As high as long, as long as wide,
 By the measure of the Apostle John....

Of sun nor moon they had no need,
 The self God was their lamp and light;
 The Lamb their lantern was in deed,
 By Him the borough glistened bright.
 Through wall and roof my eye could read,
 That were transparent to the sight;
 The throne aloft there might ye heed,
 With all the adornments round bedight
 Whereof the Apostle John did write;
 The High God's self sat thereupon,
 A river ran from that throne outright,
 Was brighter than both sun and moon....

Right as the mighty moon doth rise
 Ere thence the day-gleam driveth down,

So suddenly, in so wondrous wise,
 I was aware of a procession:
 This noble city of rich emprise
 Was suddenly full, without summon,
 Of virgins, all in that same guise
 As was my blest one 'neath her crown:

And crowned were all in the same fashion,
 Arrayed in pearls and weeds of white;
 On each one's breast was firmly bound
 That blissful pearl of great delight.

With great delight they glided fair
 On golden ways that glent like glass;
 Hundred thousands I wot there were,
 And all in suit their livery was.
 'Twas hard to choose the gladdest there:
 The Lamb before did proudly pass
 With seven horns of red gold clear;
 As precious pearls his garment was.

Toward the throne they gently pace
 In crowds, yet orderly to the sight,
 And mild as modest maids at Mass;
 So drove they forth with great delight....

Me payed full ill to be cast forth
 So suddenly from that fair region,
 From all those sights of joy and mirth:
 A heavy longing struck me in swoon,
 And heavily came my words to birth:
 'O Pearl,' quoth I, 'of rich renown,
 'Tis my sole solace here on earth
 That thou hast brought me this vision.

If it be true that thou, mine own,
 Farest for ever in garlands gay,
 Then well is me in this dim dungeon
 That thou art to this Prince's pay.'

Pearl; rendered into modern English by G. G. COULTON,
 1906 (from the text of Sir ISRAEL GOLLANZ).

PURITY AND PATIENCE

Purity (or *Cleanness*) is a review of the scriptural stories that illustrate the vices opposed to ‘clanness.’ It opens with the parable of the marriage feast (the man without a wedding garment being a type of uncleanness) and passes to the fall of the angels. Then follow accounts of the Flood and the destruction of Sodom, the pillage of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar and the impious feast of Belshazzar. It contains 1812 lines. *Patience* is the story of Jonah. The poem contains 531 lines. The quoted passage, beginning at l. 137, describes the storm.

An-on out of the north est the noys bigynes,
When bothe brethes con blowe upon blo watteres;
Rogh rakkes ther ros wyth rudnyng an-under;
The see soughe ful sore, gret selly to here;

The wyndes on the wonne water so wrastel to-geder
That the wawes ful wode waltered so highe,
& efta busched to the abyme, that breed fysches
Durst nowhere for rogh arest at the bothem.

When the breth & the brok & the bote metten,
Hit was a joyles gyn that Jonas was inne,
For hit reled on round upon the roghe ythes:
The bur ber to hit baft that braste alle her gere.

Then hurled on a hepe the helme & the sterne;
Furst to-murte mony rop & the mast after;
The sayl sweyed on the see; thenne suppe bihoved
The coge of the colde water; & thenne the cry ryse.

Yet corven thay the cordes & kest al ther-oute;
Mony ladde ther forth lep to lave & to kest;
Scopen out the scathel water that fayn scape wolde;
For be monnes lode never so luther, the lyf is ay swete.

brethes, winds con, did blo, blue Rogh rakkes, rough clouds
rudnyng, redness soughe, howled selly, marvel wonne, wan wode,
wild waltered, weltered efta busched, then sank breed, frightened
brok, water gyn, machine [i.e. boat] ythes, waves bur, rushing water
[bore] baft, stern to-murte, break down sweyed, swept suppe...water
then must the boat drink the cold water ladde, lad forth lep, leapt forth
lave, bale out scathel, dangerous lode, lot luther, evil

Ther was busy over-borde bale to kest,
 Her bagges & her fether-beddes & her bryght wedes,
 Her kysttes & her coferes, her caraldes alle;
 & al to lyghten that lome, yif lethe wolde schape.

Bot ever was ilyche loud the lot of the wyndes,
 & ever wrother the water, & wodder the stremes.
 Then tho wery for-wroght wanst no bote,
 Bot uchon glewed on his god that gayned hym beste:

Summe to Vernagu ther vouched a-vowes solemne,
 Summe to Diana devout & derf Nepturne,
 To Mahoun & to Mergot, the Mone & the Sunne,
 & uche lede as he loved, & layde had his hert.

Thenne bispeke the spakest, dispayred wel nere,—
 ‘I leve here be sum losynger, sum lawles wrech,
 That has greved his god, & gos here amonge us.
 Lo, al synkes in his synne, & for his sake marres!

I lovue that we lay lotes on ledes uchone,
 & who-so lympes the losse, lay hym ther-oute.
 & quen the guilty is gon, what may gome trawe,
 Bot he that rules the rak may rue on those other?’

Patience: an alliterative version of Jonah by the poet of Pearl, edited by Sir ISRAEL GOLLANZ, Litt.D.

caraldes, casks lome, vessel lethe, calm ilyche, alike [just as] lot, roar wodder, more wild for-wroght, over-laboured wanst, knew bote, good uchon, each glewed, cried gayned, availed derf, bold lede, spoke spakest, boldest leve, believe losynger, liar lovue, propose ledes uchone, each man lympes, incurrs gome trawe, man trow [believe] Vernagu, a giant (killed by Roland) Mahoun, Mahomet Mergot, Magog

SYR GAWAYNE AND THE GRENE KNIGHT

C. H. E. L. I. 296–297, 320–334. This, ‘the jewel of medieval romance,’ tells a strange story with wonderful art and power. The poem contains 2530 lines, broken irregularly by a refrain. It is generally assumed to be the work of the poet who wrote *The Pearl*, *Patience* and *Purity*. The dialect of all is the north-west midland, and the date of composition somewhere in the second half of the fourteenth century. The passage quoted begins at line 130. Arthur and his knights are holding their Yuletide feast at Camelot, when they are suddenly disturbed by a strange apparition.

Now wyl I of hor servise say yow no more,
 For uch wyghe may wel wit no wont that ther were.
 An other noyse ful newe neghed bilive,
 That the lude myght haf leve lif-lode to cach;
 For unethe was the noyce not a whyle sesed,
 & the fyrst course in the court kyndely served,
 Ther hales in at the halle dor an aghlich mayster,
 On the most on the molde on mesure hyghe;
 Fro the swyre to the swange so sware & so thik,
 & his lyndes & his lymes so longe & so grete,
 Half etayn in erde I hope that he were;
 Bot mon most I algate mynn hym to bene,
 & that the myriest in his muckel that myght ride;
 For of bak & of brest al were his bodi sturne,
 Bot his wombe & his wast were worthily smale,
 & alle his fetures folghande, in forme that he hade,
 ful clene;
 For wonder of his hwe men hade,
 Set in his semblaunt sene;
 He ferde as freke were fade,
 & over-al enker grene.

hor, their wyghe, man wont, lack neghed bilive, neared suddenly
 lude, folk lif-lode, food cach, take unethe, scarcely
 kyndely, duly hales, rushes aghlich mayster, fearsome lord On,
One [a person] most, largest molde, earth swyre, neck swange, loins
 sware, square lyndes, loins lymes, limbs etayn, giant hope, believe
 mon, man algate, nevertheless mynn, think myriest, grimdest
 muckel, bigness For, Though sturne, stalwart Bot, Yet
 wombe, belly fetures, members folghande, suited clene, fine semblaunt
 sene, appearance manifest ferde, behaved freke, warrior fade, hostile
 over-al, all over enker grene, vivid green

Ande al graythed in grene this gome & his wedes,
 A strayt cote ful streght, that stek on his sides,
 A mere mantile abof, mensked with-inne,
 With pelure pured apert, the pane ful clene,
 With blythe blaunner ful bryght, & his hod bothe,
 That was laght fro his lokkes, & layde on his schulderes;
 Heme-wel haled hose of that same grene,
 That spenet on his sparlyr, & clene spures under,
 Of bryght golde, upon silk bordes, barred ful ryche,
 & scholes under schankes, there the schalk rides;
 & alle his vesture verayly was clene verdure,
 Bothe the barres of his belt & other blythe stones,
 That were richely rayled in his aray clene,
 Aboutte hym-self & his sadel, upon silk werkes,
 That were to tor for to telle of tryfles the halve,
 That were enbrauded abof, wyth bryddes & flyghes,
 With gay gaudi of grene, the golde ay in myddes;
 The pendauntes of his paytrure, the proude cropyre,
 His molaynes, & alle the metail anamayld was thenne,
 The steropes that he stod on, stayned of the same,
 & his arsouns al after, & his athel sturtes,
 That ever glemered & glent al of grene stones.
 The fole that he ferkked on, fyn of that ilke,

sertayn;

A grene hors gret & thikke,
 A stede ful stif to strayne,
 In brawden brydel quik,
 To the gome he was ful gayn....

Whether hade he no helme ne hawbergh nauther,
 Ne no pysan, ne no plate that pented to armes,
 Ne no schafte, ne no schelde, to schwue ne to smyte,

graythed, <i>arrayed</i>	gome, <i>man</i>	wedes, <i>garments</i>	strayt, <i>tight</i>
streight, <i>close</i>	mere, <i>beautiful</i>	mensked, <i>adorned</i>	pelure, <i>fur</i>
pured, <i>shorn</i>	apert, <i>clearly</i>	pane, <i>cloth</i>	blythe, <i>gay</i>
laght, <i>removed</i>	heme, <i>border</i>	haled, <i>trimmed</i>	blaunner, <i>linen (?)</i>
sparlyr, <i>calf</i>	bordes, <i>edges</i>	scholes, <i>lining (?)</i>	schankes, <i>legs</i>
clene verdure, <i>pure green</i>	rayled, <i>bordered</i>	tor, <i>tedious</i>	schalk, <i>knight</i>
paytrure, <i>poitrel [horse breastplate]</i>	cropyre, <i>crupper</i>	flyghes, <i>flies</i>	molaynes, <i>bit</i>
arsouns, <i>saddlebows</i>	athel sturtes, <i>noble girths (?)</i>	fole, <i>horse</i>	
ferkkes, <i>pushes</i>	ilke, <i>like [same colour]</i>	strayne, <i>restrain</i>	
brawden, <i>embroidered</i>	gayn, <i>obedient</i>	pysan, <i>gorget</i>	pented, <i>pertained</i>
schwue, <i>protect [?schune, shun]</i>			

Bot in his on honde he hade a holyn bobbe,
 That is grattest in grene, when greves ar bare,
 & an ax in his other, a hoge & un-mete,
 A spetos sparthe to expoun in spelle quo-so myght;
 The hede of an elnyerde the large lenkthe hade,
 The grayn al of grene stele & of golde hewen,
 The bit burnyst bryght, with a brod egge,
 As wel schapen to schere as scharp rasores;
 The stele of a stif staf the sturne hit bi-grypte,
 That was wounden wyth yrn to the wandes ende,
 & al bigraven with grene, in gracios werkes;
 A lace lapped aboute, that louked at the hede,
 & so after the halme halched ful ofte,
 Wyth tryed tasseles therto tacched in-noghe,
 On botouns of the bryght grene brayden ful ryche.
 This hathel heldes hym in, & the halle entres,
 Drivande to the heghe dece, dut he no wothe,
 Haylsed he never one, bot heghe he over loked.
 The fyrst word that he warp, 'wher is,' he sayd,
 'The governour of this gyng? gladly I wolde
 Se that segg in syght, & with hym self speke
 raysoun.'

To knyghtes he kest his yghe,
 & reled hym up & doun,
 He stemmed & con studie,
 Quo walt ther most renoun....

[Arthur welcomes him and bids him stay; but the Green Knight replies that he desires not to stay, and that, though he is a warrior with keen weapons, he comes in peace to this assembly, renowned through all the world.]

'Nay, frayst I no fyght, in fayth I the telle,
 Hit arn aboute on this bench bot berdles chylder;
 If I were hasped in armes on a heghe stede,
 Here is no mon me to mach, for myghtes so wayke.

on, one holyn bobbe, holly branch greves, groves hoge, huge
 un-mete, immense spetos, cruel sparthe, battle-axe expoun, expound
 spelle, speech elnyerde, ell's length egge, blade stele, handle
 sturne, stoutly bi-grypte, gripped wandes, handle's lace, cord
 louked, fastened after, along halme, handle halched, looped
 tryed, choice hathel, lord heghe dece, high dais dut, feared wothe, injury
 Haylsed, Hail-said [saluted] warp, flung gyng, company segg, man
 reled, strode stemmed, halted con, began to Quo walt, Who bore
 frayst, seek Hit arn, There are berdles, beardless hasped, enclosed

For-thy I crave in this court a crystemas gomen,
 For hit is yol & nwe yer, & here ar yep mony;
 If any so hardy in this hous holdes hym-selven,
 Be so bolde in his blod, brayn-wod in hys hede,
 That dar stifyl strike a strok for an other,
 I schal gif hym of my gyft thys giserne ryche,
 This ax, that is hevé in-nogh, to hondele as hym lykes,
 & I schal bide the fyrst bur, as bare as I sitte.
 If any freke be so felle to fonde that I telle,
 Lepe lyghtly me to, & lach this weppen,
 I quit-clayme hit for ever, kepe hit as his auen,
 & I schal stonde hym a strok, stif on this flet,
 Elles thou wyl dight me the dom to dele hym an other,
 barlay;
 & yet gif hym respite,
 A twelmonyth & a day;
 Now hyghe, & let se tite
 Dar any her-inne oght say.'...

[All the knights are stricken to silence by this dread challenge, and the Green Stranger glares with his red eyes under his bristling green brows, and mocks at the cowardice of the mighty Round Table. Arthur himself, in indignation, accepts the challenge, seizes his axe and is about to swing it upon the Green Knight, when Gawain begs leave to quit his place and take the adventure upon him. The king grants the request and Gawain comes before the Stranger who asks him to declare his name. 'Gawain am I, that bears ye this buffet, whate'er befalleth after; and at this time twelvemonth will take from thee another with what weapon thou wilt.]

'Bigog,' quod the grene knyght, 'sir Gawan, me lykes,
 That I schal fange at thy fust that I haf frayst here;
 & thou has redily rehersed, bi resoun ful trwe,
 Clanly al the covenant that I the kynge asked,
 Saf that thou schal siker me, segge, bi thi trawthe,
 That thou schal seche me thi-self, where-so thou hopes
 I may be funde upon folde, & foch the such wages
 As thou deles me to day, bifore this douthe ryche.'

For-thy, Therefore gomen, jest yol, Yule yep, active giserne, axe
 bur, blow freke, knight felle, bold fonde, endeavour lach, take
 auen, own flet, floor Elles, If that dight, decree dom, sentence
 barlay, by our Lady hyghe, hasten se tite, say swiftly Bigog, By god
 fange, take fust, hand frayst, asked Saf, Save siker me, assure me
 seche, seek folde, field foche, fetch douthe, assembly

'Where schulde I wale the,' quod Gawan, 'where is thy place?
 I wot never where thou wonyes, bi hym that me wrought,
 Ne I know not the, knyght, thy cort, ne thi name.
 Bot teche me truly ther-to, & telle me howe thou hattes,
 & I schal ware alle my wyt to wynne me theder,
 & that I swere the for sothe, & by my seker traweth.'
 'That is in-nogh in nwe yer, hit nedes no more,'
 Quod the gome in the grene to Gawan the hende,
 'Yif I the telle trwly, quen I the tape have,
 & thou me smoethely has smyten, smartly I the teche
 Of my hous, & my home, & myn ownen nome,
 Then may thou frayst my fare, & forwardes holde,
 & if I spende no speche, thenne spedes thou the better,
 For thou may leng in thy londe, & layt no fyrre,
 bot slokes;

Ta now thy grymme tole to the,
 & let se how thou cnokes.'

'Gladly sir, for sothe,'
 Quod Gawan; his ax he strokes.

The grene knyght upon grounde graythely hym dresses,
 A littel lut with the hede, the lere he discoveres,
 His longe lovelych lokkes he layd over his croun,
 Let the naked nec to the note schewe.
 Gauan gripped to his ax, & gederes hit on hyght,
 The kay fot on the folde he be-fore sette,
 Let hit doun lyghtly lyght on the naked,
 That the scharp of the schalk schyndered the bones,
 & schrank thurgh the schyire grece, & scade hit in twynne,
 That the bit of the broun stel bot on the grounde.
 The fayre hede fro the halce hit felle to the erthe,
 That fele hit foyned wyth her fete, there hit forth roled;
 The blod brayd fro the body, that blykked on the grene;
 & nawther faltered ne fel the freke never the holder,

wale, seek	wonyes, dwellest	hattes, art named	ware, use	
seker, sure	hende, noble	tape, stroke	smartly, quickly	fare, path
leng, tarry	layt, seek	slokes, cease	Ta, Take	
grymme tole, deadly weapon	cnokes, smitest	graythely, speedily		
lut, bowed	lerc, face, purpose (?)	gederes, lifts	kay, left	
folde, ground	scharp, axe	schalk, knight	schyndered, sundered	
schrank, pierced	schyire grece, clean flesh (?)	scade, cut	bit, edge	
bot, bit	halce, neck	fele, many	brayd, poured	
blykked, shone	foyned, spurned	never the holder, nevertheless		

Bot stythly he start forth upon styf schonkes,
 & runyschly he raght out, there as renkkes stoden,
 Laght to his lufly hed, & lyft hit up sone;
 & sythen boghes to his blonk, the brydel he cachches,
 Steppes in to stel bawe & strydes alofte,
 & his hede by the here in his honde haldes;
 & as sadly the segge hym in his sadel sette,
 As non unhap had hym ayled, thagh hedles he were,
 in stedde;

He brayde his bluk aboue,
 That ugly bodi that bledde,
 Moni on of hym had doute,
 Bi that his resounes were redde.

For the hede in his honde he haldes up even,
 To-ward the derrest on the dece he dresses the face,
 & hit lyfte up the yghe-lyddes, & loked ful brode,
 & meled thus much with his muthe, as ye may now here.
 'Loke, Gawan, thou be graythe to go as thou hettes,
 & layte as lelly til thou me, lude, fynde,
 As thou hats hette in this halle, herande thise knyghtes;
 To the grene chapel thou chose, I charge the, to fotte
 Such a dunt as thou has dalt, disserved thou habbes,
 To be yederly yolden on nw yeres morn;
 The knyght of the grene chapel men knownen me mony;
 For-thi me for to fynde if thou fraystes, fayles thou never,
 Ther-fore com, other recreaunt be calde the be-hoves.'
 With a runisch rout the raynes he tornes,
 Halled out at the hal-dor, his hed in his hande,
 That the fyr of the flynt flaghe fro sole hoves.

Sir Gawayne and the Grene Knight, re-edited by RICHARD MORRIS; revised by Sir ISRAEL GOLLANZ, Litt.D. (E.E.T.S. 4).

stythly, strongly runyschly, fiercely raght, reached renkkes, men
 Laght, Seized sythen boghes, then rises blonk, steed bawe, stirrup (?)
 sadly, gravely segge, knight stedde, place brayde, started
 bluk, horse ugly, fearsome Bi that his resounes were redde, If his powers
 were governed by that derrest, noblest dresses, turns brode, steady
 meled, uttered graythe, ready hettes, saidest layte, seek lelly, loyally
 lude, man herande, in the hearing of fotte, fetch dunt, blow
 dalt, dealt yederly yolden, promptly given For-thi, Therefore
 fraystes, enquirest runisch, fierce rout, tug flaghe, flashed
 sole hoves, the horse's hoofs

LATER TRANSITION ENGLISH LEGENDARIES AND CHRONICLERS

ROBERT OF GLOUCESTER'S *CHRONICLE*: THE BATTLE OF EVESHAM

C. H. E. L. I. 335-338. The gradual triumph of native English is shown in the fact that 'some of the chief contributions to our literature during the two generations immediately preceding that of Chaucer were translations from Latin and Norman-French, made...expressly for the delectation of the common people.' The writings now under consideration fall into two main classes, religious and historical, alike in this, that the homilies point their moral with legends and the histories adorn their tale with morals. The three chief chroniclers of the period are Robert of Gloucester, Thomas Bek of Castleford and Robert Mannyng of Brunne. The chronicle of Thomas Bek—nearly forty thousand lines in length—exists in a unique manuscript at Göttingen and still awaits an editor. To the chronicle known as Robert of Gloucester's more than one hand contributed. Probably Robert was responsible for that part of the longer version (there are two) which continues the story after the reign of Henry I. His work dates from the very end of the thirteenth century. 'There can be little doubt that the *Chronicle* was composed in the abbey of Gloucester. The language is that of south Gloucestershire....From the beginning of the reign of Henry III the poem becomes valuable both as history and literature. The writer, whom we may now certainly call Robert, was...either an eye-witness of the facts he relates, or had heard of them from eye-witnesses. He had, moreover, a distinct narrative gift....The form of this *Chronicle* is no less interesting than its theme. Its metre is an adaptation of the two half-lines of Old English poetry into one long line....The line has a swinging rhythm especially suited to narrative verse, and the poem is of metrical importance as showing the work of development in progress.' In its longest form the *Chronicle* contains over twelve thousand lines. The extract following begins at l. 11,630—the arrival of Simon the younger at Winchester. The verse divisions of MS Cott. Cal. A xi have been retained in the present extract.

Thut folc that was in the toun · the gates made vaste ·
& wuste the toun ayen him · the biker longe ilaste ·

vaste, *fast*

wuste, *defended*

biker, *strife*

So that mid strengthe · sir simon then toun nom ·
 & robbede & slou vaste · tho he withinne com ·
 Alle the gywes of the toun · he let sle echon ·
 That me in eni stede fond · he ne levede alive non ·
 Ac after thulke time · of wat him was to done ·
 Lute god cas him bivel · as me ssal ihure sone ·
 Fram thenne he wende to oxenford · thre dawes he was
 there ·

Vairore folc ne mighte be · than with him was there ·
 The gywes he let seche · vor to quelle echon ·
 Ac me ne mighte vor no thing · in the toune finde on ·
 Fram thanene to keningwurthe · with is ost he wende ·
 & there as it fel alas · is heie herte him ssende ·
 Vor so muche he tolde of him sulf · & of is grete mighte ·
 That him ne deinede noght · to ligge · in the castel bi nighte ·
 Sir edward & is ost · at wircetre tho were ·
 Hii adde gode aspies · hou hii hom tho bere ·
 So that sir edward & the erl · of gloucestre al so ·
 & sir roger de mortimer · & mani god knight therto ·
 In a lammasse night · saternight that was ·
 Out of wurcetre he wende · mid wel god pas ·
 To keningwurthe · hii come · in the dawiinge ·
 Hii broghte sir simon & is men · an feble tithinge ·
 In hor bed hii founde hom · in toune tho hii come ·
 Of softe awakiinge · hii toke lute gome ·
 Vor to wel clothi hom · hii ne geve hom no tome ·
 Manie hii slowe of hor fon · & heie men some hii nome ·
 As sir roberd erl of oxenford · & sir willam ther to ·
 De mountchalsi & sir adam · de neumarch al so ·
 & sir water de colestile · & other manion ·
 Ac sir simond him sulf · among alle is fon ·

nom, took slou vaste, slew quickly tho, when gywes, fews
 echon, each one stede, place Ac, But thulke, that
 Lute god cas, Little good fortune ssal, shall ihure, hear dawes, days
 Vairore, Fairer seche, seek quelle, kill on, one thanene, thence
 keningwurthe, Kenilworth ssende, disgraced tolde, reckoned
 deinede, deigned ligge, lie wircetre, Worcester tho, there
 adde, had aspies, spies hii, they hom, themselves as bere, bore
 wel god pas, very good speed tithinge, tidings hor, their lute
 gome, little care geve, gave tome, time as fon, foes nome, took
 manion, many a one

In to the castel of scapede · an naked man unnethe ·
 Ac manion ther was inome · & mani ibrought to dethe ·
 & thus sir simond the yonge · was verst to grounde ibrought ·
 Ac natholes he ne les tho · all is poer nouȝt ·
 Ac gret ost huld inou · & yarkede in ech ende ·
 Him & al is poer · ayen is fader to wende ·
 Tho was sir simond is fader · at hereforde iwis ·
 Mid mani god man of engelond · & al so of walies ·
 He wende him out of hereford · mid vair ost inou ·
 & toward keningwurthe · ayen is sone he drou ·
 & was hor beire porpos · to biclosi hor fon ·
 As wo seith in either half · & to ssende hom echon ·
 So that sir simon the olde com · the monendai iwis ·
 To a toun biside wircetre · that kemeseie ihote is ·
 The tiwesday to evesham · he wende the morweninge ·
 & there he let him & is folc · prestes massen singe ·
 & thoghte to wende northward · is sone vor to mete ·
 Ac the king nolde a vot · bote he dinede other ete ·
 & sir simon the yonge & is ost · at alcestre were ·
 & nolde thanne wende a vot · ar hii dinede there ·
 Thulke to diners · delvol were alas ·
 Vor mani was the gode bodi · that ther thoru islawe was ·
 Sir edward & is poer · sone come tho ride ·
 To the northhalf of the toun · bataile vor to abide ·
 Tho sir simon it iwuste · & hii that with him were ·
 Sone hii lete hom armi · & hor baners arere ·
 The bissop water of wurcetre ·asoiled hom alle there ·
 & prechede hom that hii adde · of deth the lasse fere ·
 Then wei evene to hor fon · a godes half hii nome ·
 & wende that sir simond · the yonge ayen hom come ·
 Tho hii come in to the feld · & sir simond isei ·
 Sir edwardes ost · & othere al so nei ·
 He avisede the ost suithe wel · & thoru godes grace ·
 He hopede winne a day · the maistrie of the place ·

ne les, *did not lose* poer, power inou, enough yarkede, made ready
 ayen, against walis, Wales beire, both (of each), biclosi, surround
 As wo seith, *As one saith* kemeseie, Kempsey vot, foot ar, ere
 Thulke to diners, *Those two dinners* delvol, doleful ther thoru,
 through this iwuste, knew armi, to arm arere, raise water of wurcetre,
Walter de Cantelupe a godes half, in God's part nome, took isei, saw
 nei, nigh avisede, observed suithe, very

Tho sei he ther biseide · as he bihuld aboute ·
 The erles baner of gloucestre · & him mid al is route ·
 As him vor to close · in the other half ywis ·
 Ough he sede redi folk · & wel iwar is this ·
 & more conne of bataile · than hii couthe bivore ·
 Ur soules he sede abbe god · vor ur bodies beth hore ·
 Sir henri he sede to is sone · this hath imad thi prute ·
 Were thi brother icome · hope we mighte yute ·
 Hii bitoke lif & soule · to godes grace echon ·
 & in to bataile smite · vaste among hor fon ·
 & as gode knightes · to grounde slowe anon ·
 That hor fon flowe sone · thicke manion ·
 Sir warin of bassingbourne · tho he this iseis ·
 Bivore he gan prikie · & to grede an hei ·
 Ayen traitors ayen · & habbeth in ower thoght ·
 Hou villiche at lewes · ye were to grounde ibrought ·
 Turneth ayen & thencheth · that that power al oure is ·
 & we ssolle as vor noght · overcome ur fon iwis ·
 Tho was the bataile strong · in either side alas ·
 Ac atten ende was binethe · thulke that feblore was ·
 & sir simond was aslawe · & is folk al to grounde ·
 More murthre thare nas · in so lute stounde ·
 Vor there was werst simond · de mountfort aslawe alas ·
 & sir henri is sone · that so gentil knight was ·
 & sir hue the despencer · the noble iustise ·
 & sir peris de mountfort · that stronge were & wise ·
 Sir willam de verous · & sir Rauf basset also ·
 Sir John de sein ion · sir Ion dive therto ·
 Sir William trossel · sir gileberd of eisnesfelde ·
 & mani god bodi were aslawe · there in thulke felde ·
 & among alle othere mest · reuthe it was ido ·
 That sir simon the olde man · de membred was so ·
 Vor sir willam mautravers · thonk nabbe he non ·
 Carf him of fet & honde · & is limes manion ·

sei, saw Ough, Oh! iwar, wise conne, know couthe, knew
 abbe god, may God have hore, theirs prute, pride yute, yet
 prikie, spur grede, call habbeth in ower thoght, have in your mind
 villiche, viley Turneth, Turn ye thencheth, think ye ssolle, shall
 murthre, slaughter thare nas, never was lute stounde, little time
 werst, first mest reuthe, most ruth de membred, dismembered
 nabbe he non, may he have limes, limbs

& that mest pite was · hii ne bilevede nought this ·
 That is prive membres · hii ne corve of iwis ·
 & is heved hii smiten of · & to wigemor it sende ·
 To dam Maud the mortimer · that wel foule it ssende ·
 & of al that me him bilimedē · hii ne bledde nocht me sede ·
 & the harde here was · is lich the nexte wede ·
 Suich was the morthre of evesham · vor bataile non it nas ·
 & therwith Iesu crist wel uvele ipaied was ·
 As he ssewede bi tokninge · grisliche & gode ·
 As it vel of him sulve · tho he deide on the rode ·
 That thorū al the middelerd · derkhede ther was inou ·
 Al so the wule the godemen · at evesham me slou ·
 As in the northwest · a derk weder ther aros ·
 So demliche suart inou · that mani man agros ·
 & over caste it thoghte al that lond · that me mighte unnethe ise ·
 Grisloker weder than it was · ne mighte anerthe be ·
 An vewe dropes of reine · ther velle grete inou ·
 This tokninge vel in this lond · tho me this men slou ·
 Vor thretti mile thanne · this iseī roberd ·
 That verst this boc made · & was wel sore aferd ·

The Metrical Chronicle of Robert of Gloucester, edited by
 WILLIAM ALDIS WRIGHT (Rolls Series, two vols., 1887).

bilevede, refrained	wel foule, very foully	bilimedē, dismembered
harde here, stiff hair shirt	lich, body	nexte wede, nearest garment
uvele ipaied, ill-pleased	ssewede, showed	tokninge, tokens
grisliche, terrible	vel, fell	when rode, cross
derkhede, darkness	tho, while	middelerd, world
demliche, dimly (? sodeinliche)	me slou, one slew	weder, storm
thoghte, seemed	suart, swart	agros, were frightened
anerthe, on earth	unnethe, scarcely	Grisloker, More terrible
thannte, thirty miles thence	An vewe, A few	vel, fell
	roberd, Robert (I, Robert, saw this)	thretti mile

THE SOUTH ENGLISH LEGENDARY: ST BRENDAN

C. H. E. L. I. 338–339. The *South English Legendary* is ‘a collection of versified lives of the saints in the same dialect and metre as those of the Gloucester *Chronicle*.’ It had its origin in the neighbourhood of Gloucester towards the end of the thirteenth century, and more than one author was concerned in it. Indeed, the composition of such a collection of lives by various hands might well have been spread over many years. Of the saints’ lives therein contained none has greater attraction than the story of St Brendan. In the words of Thomas Wright: ‘Almost all nations which lived near the sea have had their legendary navigators. St Brendan was a Christian Ulysses, and his story had much the same influence on the western Catholics, as the *Odyssey* upon the Greeks. There are several remarkable points of similarity between St Brendan and the Sinbad of the Arabian Nights, and at least one incident in the two narratives is identical—that of the disaster on the back of the great fish.’ Half-remembered legends of ancient adventures on the sea are here re-presented as the voyage of a Christian saint in search of an earthly paradise. We need not discuss the possible sources of the English story. One incident in St Brendan’s voyage, the meeting in mid-ocean with the ghastly figure of Judas in his brief respite from the tortures of hell, will be familiar (in altered form) from Matthew Arnold’s poem.

Seint Brendan and his bretheren to schipe wende anon,
 And rue forthe faste in the see, with tempest meni on,
 So that hi seghe in another side an ylle gret y-nough;
 Here schip thurf Godes grace thider-wardes drough.
 Tho hit cam almet ther-to, upe the roche hit gan ride,
 That hit ne mighthe noght to the ylle come, ac billevede biside.
 This monekes wende up to this ylle, ac seint Brendan noght;
 This monekes gonue make here mete of that hi hadde i-brought.
 Hi makede fur, and soden hem fisch in a caudroun faste;
 Er this fish were i-sode, somdel hi were agaste.
 For tho this fur was thurf hot, the yle quakede anon,
 And with gret eir hupte al up; this monekes dradde echon,
 Hi bihilde hou the yle in the see wende faste,
 And as a quic thing hupte up and doun, and that fur fram him
 caste.
 He suam more than tuei myle while this fur i-laste.
 The monekes i-seghe the fur wel longe, and were sore agaste;
 Hi cride yurne on seint Brendan, what the wonder were.
 ‘Beoth stille,’ quath this gode man, ‘for noght ye nabbe fere!

Ye weneth that hit beo an yle, ac ye thencheth amis,
 Hit is a fisch of this grete see, the gretteste that ther is,
 Jascom he is i-cleped, and fondeth night and dai
 To putte his tail in his mouth, ac for gretnisse he ne mai.'
 Forth hi rue in the see evene west wel faste
 Threo dayes er hi seghe lond, hi were somdel agaste;
 Tho seghen hi a wel fair lond, of floures thikke y-nough.
 Wel glade hi were tho hi seghe that here schip thider drough.
 In this faire lond hi wende lengere than ich telle,
 So that hi fonde in a place a suythe noble welle;
 Bi the welle stode a treo, brod and round y-nough,
 Foweles white and faire y-nough were in everech bough,
 That unethe eni leef hi mighte theron i-seo,
 Ther was joye and blisse y-nough to lokie on suche o treo.
 Seint Brendan for joye wep, and sat a-doun a-kneo,
 And bad oure Loverd schowi him what such a cas mighte
 beo.

Tho fleh ther up a lute fowel, tho he gan to fleo,
 As a fithele his wynges furde tho he to him-ward gan teo;
 Murie instrument nevere nas that his wyngen were.
 He bihuld seint Brendan with wel faire chere.
 'Ich hote,' seide seint Brendan, 'if thu ert messenger,
 That thu sigge me what ert, and what ye doth her.'
 Theh hit thoghte aye cunde, this fowel ansuerede anon,
 'We were,' he seide, 'sum tyme was, angles in hevene echon;
 As sone as we were y-maked, oure maister was to prout,
 Lucefer, for his fairhede, that he ful sone out,
 And mid him also meni on, as here dede was,
 And we fulle also a-doun, ac for no synne hit nas,
 Ac for nothing that we assente to his foule unright,
 Bote soulement for to schewe oure Loverdes suete might;
 Ne we ne beoth her in pyne non, ac in joye y-nough we beoth,
 And somdel oure suete Loverdes mighte we seoth,
 And bi the urthe we fleoth, and bi the lifte also,
 As gode angles and lithere ek right is for to do,
 The gode to do men god, the lithere lithere makieth;
 And Sonedai, that is dai of rest, such forme we maketh,
 The forme of suche white foweles as thu might i-seo,
 Honureth God that ous makede her on this brode treo.
 Tuelf month hit i-passed nou, that ye gunne out wende,

And alle this six yer ye schulle fare, er ye schulle bringe youre
wille to ende;
For whan ye habbeth i-wend sove yer, oure Loverd wole you
sende
A sight that ye habbeth longe i-soght, anon after the sove
yeres ende;
Eche yer ye schulle her mid ous holde Ester feste,
As ye nou doth, forte ye come to the lond of biheste,
Nou was hit an Esterdal that al this was i-do:
The fowel nom his leve of hem, and to his felawes wende tho.
The foweles tho hit eve was, bigonne here evesong;
Muriere song ne mighte i-beo, theh God silf were among.
The monekes wende to bedde and slepe, tho soper was i-do,
And tho hit was tyme of matyns hi arise ther-to.
The foweles sunge ek here matyns wel right tho hit was tyme,
And of the Sauter seide the vers, and siththe al to prime,
And underne siththe and middai, and afterwardes non,
And eche tyde songen of the dai as cristene men scholde don.

In place of a gloss the reader may prefer to have the version from *The Golden Legend* in the English of William Caxton.

And than they sayled forth, and came soone after to that lond; but bycause of lytell depthe in some place, and in some place were grete rockes, but at the last they wente upon an ylonde, wenynge to them they had ben safe, and made theron a fyre for to dresse theyr dyner, but saynt Brandon abode stylly in the shyppe. And whan the fyre was ryght hote, and the meet nygh soden, than this ylonde began to move; wherof the monkes were aferde, and fledde anone to the shyppe, and lefte the fyre and meet behynde them, and mervayled sore of the movyng. And saynt Brandon comforted them, and sayd that it was a grete fisshe named Jasconye, whiche laboureth nyght and daye to put his tayle in his mouth, but for gretnes he may not. And than anone they sayled west thre dayes and thre nyghtes or they sawe ony londe, wherfore they were ryght hevy. But soone after, as God wold, they sawe a fayre ylonde, full of floures, herbes, and trees, wherof they thanked God of his good grace, and anone they went on londe. And whan they had gone longe in this, they founde a ful fayre well, and therby stode a fayre tree, full of bowes, and on every bough sate a fayre byrde, and they sate so thycke on the tree that unneth ony lefe of the tree myght be seen, the nombre of them was so grete, and they songe so meryly that it was an hevenly noyse to here. Wherfore saynt Brandon kneled down on his knees, and wepte for joye, and made his prayers devoutly unto our Lord God to knowe what these byrdes ment. And than anone one of the byrdes fledde fro the tree to saynt Brandon, and he with flykerynge of his wynges made a full mery noyse lyke a fyldle, that hym semed he herde never so joyfull a melodye. And than saynt Brandon commaunded the byrde to tell hym the cause why

they sate so thycke on the tree, and sange so meryly. And than the byrde sayd, ‘Somtyme we were aungels in heven, but whan our mayster Lucyfer fell down into hell for his hygh prude, we fell with hym for our offences, some hyther, and some lower, after the qualyté of theyr trespace; and bycause our trespace is but lytell, therfore our Lorde hath set us here out of all Payne in full grete joye and myrrh, after his pleasyng, here to serve hym on this tree in the best maner that we can. The Sonday is a day of rest fro all worldly occupacyon, and, therfore, that daye all we be made as whyte as ony snow, for to prayse our Lorde in the best wyse we may.’ And than this byrde sayd to saynt Brandon, ‘It is xij. monethes past that ye departed fro your abbey, and in the vij. yere hereafter ye shall se the place that ye desyre to come, and all this vij. yere ye shal kepe your Eester here with us every yere, and in the ende of the vij. yere ye shal come into the Londe of Byhest.’ And this was on Eester daye that the byrde sayd these wordes to saynt Brandon. And than this fowle flewe agayn to his felawes that sate on the tree. And than all the byrdes began to syng evensonge so meryly, that it was an hevenly noyse to here; and after souper saynt Brandon and his felawes wente to bedde, and slepte well, and on the morowe they arose betymes, and than those byrdes began matyns, pryme, and houres, and all suche service as Chrysten men use to synge.

St Brandan; a Medieval Legend of the Sea, edited by THOMAS WRIGHT: Percy Society, XLVIII (1844).

THE METRICAL HOMILIES: TALE OF A USURER

C. H. E. L. I. 340–341. ‘While the monks of Gloucester were thus busy with hagiology, similar activity was exhibited in the north of England.’ A cycle of homilies was composed, possibly at the beginning of the fourteenth century, covering all the Sundays in the ecclesiastical year. The oldest MS (in the Royal College of Physicians at Edinburgh) opens with an explanation that the work is ‘intended for ignorant men who cannot understand French; and since it is the custom of the common people to come to church on Sundays,’ the Gospel for the day has been turned into English for them. The version, however, ‘is not a close translation; it resembles *Ormulum* in giving first a paraphrase of the Scripture, and then an exposition of the passage chosen; but, in addition to this, there is also a *narracio*, or story, to illustrate the lesson and drive the moral home.’ The most striking homily is that for the Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany on the subject of Christ’s stilling of the tempest. In terse stern language the writer likens the sea to the world, full of great fishes—the rich men, devouring the small—the poor. We are reminded ludicrously of Swift’s famous lines and then more seriously of later and greater denunciations of social injustice, *Piers Plowman* and *Utopia*.

For wit ensampel, mai we se
 That al this werld es bot a se,
 That bremli bares on banc wit bale,
 And gret fisches etes the smale.
 For riche men of this werd etes
 That pouer wit thair travail getes.
 For wit pouer men fares the king
 Riht als the quale fars wit the elringe,
 And riht als sturioun etes merling,
 And lobbekeling etes sperling,
 Sua stroies mare men the lesse,
 Wit wa and werldes wrangwisnes....

Narracio

An hali man biyond the se
 Was bischop of a gret cité;
 God man he was, and Pers he hiht,
 And thar bisyd woned a kniht,
 That thoru kind was bond and thralle,
 Bot knihthed gat he wit catalle.
 This catel gat he wit okering,
 And led al his lif in corsing;
 For he haunted bathe dai and niht
 His okering, sine he was kniht,
 Als fast as he did bifore,
 And tharwit gat he gret tresore.
 Bot Crist, that boht us der wit pine,
 Wald noht this mannes sawel tine,
 Bot gaf him graz himself to knew,
 And his sin to the bischop schaw.
 Quen he him schraf at this bischop,
 This bischop bad him haf god hop,
 And asked him, yef he walde tac
 Riht penanz, for his sinful sac.
 ‘Ful gladli wil I tac,’ he said,
 ‘The penanz that bes on me laid’;

bot, but se, sea bremli bares, fiercely beats banc, shore werd, world quale, whale elringe, herring sturioun, sturgeon merling, whiting lobbekeling, cod (?) sperling, sprat Sua, So stroies, destroys thoru kind, by birth catalle, riches okering, usury corsing, exchange tine, lose him schraf, confessed himself sac, guilt

And the bischop said, ‘thou sal mete
 A beggar gangand by the strete;
 And quat-als-ever he askes the,
 Gif him; this sal thi penanz be.’
 And ful wel paid was this kniht,
 For him thoht his penanz ful liht.
 And als he for hamward, he mette
 A beggar that him cumly grette,
 And said, ‘lef sir, par charité,
 Wit sum almons thou help me.’
 This kniht asked quat he wald haf;
 ‘Laverd,’ he said, ‘sum quet I crave.’
 ‘Hou mikel,’ he said, ‘askes thou me?’
 ‘A quarter, laverd, par charité.’
 This kniht granted him his bone,
 And gert met him his corn sone.
 This pover man was will of wan,
 For poc no sek no havid he nan,
 Quarin he moht this quete do;
 And forthi this kniht said him to,
 ‘This quete I rede thou selle me,
 For ful pouer me thinc the.’
 The pover said, ‘layth thinc me
 To selle Goddes charité,
 Bot len me sum fetel tharto,
 Quarin I mai thin almons do.’
 And he ansuered and said, ‘nai,’
 For al that this beggar moht sai,
 And said, ‘this corn thou selle me,
 For fetil wil I nan len the.’
 The beggar moht na better do,
 Bot sald this corn igain him to,
 And toc thar-for fif schilling,
 And went him forthe on his begging.
 Quen this corn to the kniht was sald,
 He did it in an arc to hald,
 And opened this arc the thrid daye,

for, fared quet, wheat gert met, caused to be measured
 will of wan, at a loss poc, bag sek, sack Quarin, Wherein do, put
 layth thinc me, I am loth fetel, vessel arc, chest

And fand tharin, selcouthe to saye,
 Snakes and nederes thar he fand,
 And gret blac tades gangand,
 And arskes, and other wormes felle,
 That I kan noht on Inglis telle.
 Thai lep upward til his visage,
 And gert him al mast fal in rage,
 Sa was he for thir wormes ferde;
 Bot noht forthi that arc he speride,
 And to the bischope in a ras
 He ran, and tald him al his cas.

The bischop sau that Godd wald tak
 Of this man sin wrethal wrac.
 And said, ‘yef thou wil folfille
 Wit worthi penanz Goddes wille,
 And clens wit penanz riht worthi
 Al thi sinnes and thi foli,
 I red that thou self the falle
 Nakid imang tha wormes alle,
 No gif thou of the self na tale,
 Bot bring thi sawel out of bale.
 Thoh tha wormes thi caroin gnawe,
 Thi pynes lastes bot a thrawe;
 And than sal thi sawel wende
 To lif of blis, witouten ende.’
 This okerer was selli radde
 To do that this bischop him badde,
 Bot of mercy haft he god hop,
 And gern he prayd the bischop,
 And said, ‘lef fader, I prai the,
 That thou prai inwardli for me,
 That God gif me his graz to fang,
 One my bodi, this penanz strang.’
 The bischop hiht this man lelye,
 To prai for him riht inwardlye.
 This man went ham, thoh he war rad,
 And did als his bischop him badde;

selcouthe, <i>marvellous</i> (hurry)	arskes, <i>newts</i> caroin, <i>flesh</i>	thrawe, <i>moment</i> fang, <i>receive</i>	speride, <i>fastened</i> sell radde, <i>wondrously afraid</i> lelye, <i>truly</i>	ras, <i>race</i>
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For imang al thir wormes snelle,
 Als nakid als he was born, he felle.
 Thir wormes ete that wreche manne,
 And left nathing of him bot ban.

text of W. W. SKEAT: *Specimens of Early English*, II.

CURSOR MUNDI: DAVID AND GOLIATH

C. H. E. L. I. 342–344. The most remarkable work of the period is the encyclopedic book of scriptural story, *Cursor Mundi*—‘the Course of the World men do it call’—a poem of some 24,000 lines composed in the early part of the fourteenth century. It was expressly intended to displace the romances of chivalry and to edify by amusing. ‘It opens with a prologue, which is, practically, the author’s “apology” for his undertaking. Men, he says, rejoice to hear romances of Alexander and Julius Caesar, of the long strife between Greece and Troy, of King Arthur and Charlemagne. Each man is attracted by what he enjoys the most, and all men delight especially in their “paramours”; but the best lady of all is the Virgin Mary, and whosoever takes her for his own shall find that her love is ever true and loyal. Therefore, the poet will compose a work in her honour; and, because French rimes are commonly found everywhere, but there is nothing for those who know only English, he will write it for him who “na Frenche can.” With this explanation the author embarks on his vast theme, which he divides according to the seven ages of the world.... The writer was an accomplished scholar, well read in medieval literature. His work, indeed, is a storehouse of legends, not all of which have been traced to their original sources.... The whole poem shows considerable artistic skill. In spite of the immense mass of material with which it deals, it is well proportioned, and the narrative is lucid and easy.’ It is written chiefly in the eight-syllabled couplet, but there are variations. ‘Of the author, beyond the fact that he was, as he himself states, a cleric, nothing whatever is known.’ In the present extract the reading of MS Cotton Vesp. A III has been used. The forms are Northumbrian.

To-quils come in philistiens,
 thair felun faas that war paens,
 thai overal the cuntre spredd,
 thai wasted godes and awai ledd.
 thai broght wit tham goli, that eten,
 In fule hordom than was he geten,

To-quils, *Meanwhile* felun faas, *felon foes* paens, *pagans* goli, *Goliath*
 eten, *giant* fule, *foul* geten, *begotten*

ffoure may wyne his in stoures
 þt þei be omis & her heires
 ff þei wyne oures wo so penes
 Gye q bide my self redy
 ffor to fute foroures party
 vche day he com in place
 And bataile led wip enche manato
 ouer whens þe folke hi caske
 hem stod penne of hi fil greet alle

Allas seide saul pe kyng pan
 Whoso shal be fynde a man
 ffor þe bataile for my caske
 Areyn þis peof vndertake
 Who so woldo fute hi arm
 And hi outcome in bataile pleyn
 he shulde be richel his lyne
 And haue my douȝar to his wyne

Sand þis hysde & forþ gan stonde
 Sir le seide holde me conenonde
 q gosko neskele in goddes myȝt
 þt q shal vndertake þe fute
 Areyn gohyf is eo gyn
 wip goddes gracie cle shal q him
 Areyn pe zondir wretched yng
 ffor we pe hanȝ q no diedo sir kyng
 he trystey al in his al kno hand
 And a m god al geldand

Gret he was wit-all, and hei,
 And semed sathan on to sei
 Bituix his eien, thre fote brade,
 Ful lath it was his visage made.
 O bodi gret, o granis lang,
 Unsternli semed he be strang,
 Sex eln and mare he had on hight,
 And was all armed for to fight.
 Of his metscip was mesur nan,
 He wald ete seven scep him an.
 ‘Quare es now,’ said he, ‘saul the king?
 Moght i ever wit me wit him ming
 Suld he never aftur ber cron,
 I suld him sla, bi sir mahun!...’
 ‘Allas,’ he said, king saul, than,
 ‘Allas! quar sal we find a man
 that dar the fight, for mi sake,
 Again yon warlau undertake?
 the man that him wald fight a-gain,
 And moght over-cum him wit his main,
 I suld him riche in all his lijf,
 And give mi doghther him to wijf.’
 this herd david, and forth can stand,
 ‘Sir king,’ he said, ‘hald me covenand,
 I tru truli in godds might,
 that i sal under-tak the fight,
 Agains yon gerard that es sa grim,
 Wit godds grace i sal sla him.
 Again yon wreche haithen thing,
 For-soth haf i na dred, sir king;
 He traistest al in his aun hand,
 And ic in him es all weldand.’

To david said saul the king,
 ‘I hope thatril thou be ful ying,
 Yon es a stalworth batail wright,
 And thou lered never for to fight.

lath, *loathly* O, *Of* granis, legs Unsternli, *Terribly* eln, *ells*
 metscip, *oode* scep, sheep him an, by *himself* ming, meddle
 ber cron, *wear crown* warlau, *warlock* tru, *trust* gerard, *devil*
 And ic...weldand, *And I in Him who governs all* lered, *learned*

If he sla the, als god for-bede,
 All mon we hald of hathen lede.
 Quat bot to lese thi lijf, leve page,
 And we to tham ma sithen homage?'

'Do wai,' sir king, 'es noght to drede
 that godd will help, dut es na nede
 Apon a dai mi scep i gette,
 A bere, a leon, bath i mete;
 I had na help bot me allan,
 And drightin that me lent his lan;
 thai soght me for to rend and rive,
 And i laid hand on thaim be-live,
 And scok tham be the berdes sua
 that i thair chafftes rave in tua,
 Wit-uten glaive or suerd or knijf,
 Bath i refte tham thair live.
 He that me thar the maistre gave,
 He me do it here to have.
 It es noght worth, leif sir king,
 that man in godd have mistrouing.'
 'Ga than,' he said, 'in godds grith,
 that he-self ai be the with,
 Gaes and fottes me in hij,
 Mine aun armur to child dav.'
 Helm and hauberc on him thai did,
 And gird him wit a suerd emid;
 Quen that david was armed sua,
 Forth a fote ne moght he ga,
 Ne fortherward ne yeitt o bake,
 Bot thar he stod als still os stake.
 His arms fra him did he suing,
 And tok bot a staf and a sling
 that he was wont to bere in hand,
 Abute his flock o scep walcand.
 He tok five stans rond o quin,
 And put tham in his scrip wit-in.

Quat bot, *What good sithen, afterwards dut, doubt drightin, the Lord lan, grace scok, shook sua, thus chafftes, jaws suerd, sword mistrouing, mistrust grith, grace Gaes, Go fottes, fetch hij, haste fortherward, forwards os stake, as a post walcand, walking quin, whin (basalt)*

'Dos awai,' he said 'this gere,
Certes can i nan armes bere;
Bot wit mi sling i sal him fell,
Do ga we forth, wit-uten duell.'...

Quen golias on him bi-held,
Ful littel tale of him he told,
Bot held him als for in despite,
And thus bigan on him to flite.
'Quat! wynsthou i am a hund,
Wit thi stans me for to stund?
Cum forth wreche, wit-uten bade,
thi flesche sal foghul fud be made.'
David ansuard, 'if godd wil, nai!
I have in drightin fest mi fai,
Wit armes cumst thou me again,
And i agains the al plain,
I cum agains the in his nam,
that thou has said despite and scham;
thou has him and his in despite,
that wit his grace i sal the quite.
thi bodi sal i give to gifte,
To ete wit foghuls of the lift,
that all mai wit that godd o might
Sauves noght man in wapen bright,
Bot for to trou in him stedfast,
And stabel in his lai to last.'

'thou es,' coth golias, 'bot ded.'
Coth david, 'godd i tak to red.'
'Wil thou,' coth goli, 'fight wit me?'
'I red be-time thou hethen fle.'
'Fle that wynnes to have the warr,
For ar i fle i sal cum narr.'
Wit that stan he laid in sling,
Sua stalworthli he lete it suing
that in his frunt that stan he fest,
that bath his eien ute can brest;

Dos awai, Take off duell, delay flite, jeer wynsthou, do you think
stund, strike bade, delay foghul fud, fowl's food drightin, the Lord
fai, faith quite, quit lift, air lai, law red, advise fle, to flee
wynnes, thinks Sua, So can brest, gan burst

Wit this he fel, was na selli,
 And ute his suerd than drou davi,
 And hedded him wit his aun brand,
 And broght it the king to presand.
 the sarzins war thar neigh be-side
 All fled, durst thai na langer bide,
 Bot thar was mani feld to grund,
 And mani fled wit dedes wond.

Cursor Mundi, ed. RICHARD MORRIS (E.E.T.S.
 57, 59, 62, 66, 68, 99, 101), 1874-1893.

selli, *marvel* sarzins, *Saracens* dedes, *death's*

ROBERT MANNYNG OF BRUNNE: *THE MERCIFUL KNIGHT*

C. H. E. L. I. 344-352. ‘The most skilful story-teller of his time was Robert Mannyng of Brunne [*i.e.* Bourne in Lincolnshire], who, between 1303 and 1338, translated into his native tongue two poems written in poor French by English clerics. These two works were William of Wadington’s “Manuel des Pechiez,” written, probably, for Norman settlers in Yorkshire, and a chronicle composed by Peter of Langtoft, a canon of the Augustinian priory of Bridlington.’ His purpose, declared in the opening lines, is to benefit ‘ignorant men, who delight in listening to stories at all hours, and often hearken to evil tales which may lead to their perdition.’ He therefore offers them stories that will edify and instruct. He deals successively with the ten commandments, the seven deadly sins and the twelve points of shrift. It is interesting to find this moralist declaring that tournaments are the occasion of all the deadly sins; and that so, too, are religious plays. Only two of these should be performed, those on the nativity and the resurrection, and they must be played within the church. If played in the highways they are sinful, and special reprobation attaches to priests who lend vestments for such performances. ‘It is impossible for any short account of *Handlyng Synne* to convey an adequate idea of its charm and interest. Mannyng excels in all the qualities of a narrator. He combines, in fact, the *trouvère* with the homilist, and shows the way to Gower’s *Confessio Amantis*.... Apart from its literary qualities, *Handlyng Synne* has considerable value as a picture of contemporary manners.... In his attacks on tyrannous lords, and his assertion of the essential equality of men, he resembles the authors of *Piers Plowman*... and in words which may not have been unknown to Chaucer, he draws the picture of the ideal parish priest.’ The dialect is north-east midland, and the verse the eight-syllabled iambic couplet. The poem contains over 12,000 lines. Mannyng’s other work, the *Chronicle of England*, is less important. The first part is based on Wace’s version of Geoffrey, the second

on an Anglo-Norman chronicle by Peter of Langtoft. He is supposed to be the author as well of *Meditations on the Supper of Our Lord* from the Latin of Cardinal Bonaventura.

Betwyxe twey knyghtes be-yunde the see
 Fyl a grete cuntek to be;
 Betwyxe hem fyl swyche wrath & wo
 That the toon weyted the tother to slo:
 They mette to-gedyr, y ne wote how;
 Algate the toon the tother slow.
 Thys ychē slain knyght had a chylde,
 A doghthy bachelere, and a wylde;
 thys ychē chylde toke hym to rede
 For to venge hys fadrys ded;
 He gate hym grete powere and myght
 And beseged the tother knyght.
 The tother knyght perseyved hym wel,
 And drogh hym to hys best castel.
 Tho was he beseged so streytly,
 That he durst come oute on no party
 Of alle the twelve monthe with no deseyt,
 So was he beseged streyte;
 Messe ne matyns he ne herde
 Ne nagher to the cherge he ferde;
 And hyt was yn the lentyn tyde,
 when men shuld levē wrath & prydē.
 Than fyl hyt on the gode fryday,
 The knyght that yn the castel lay
 loked oute, and say men go
 To the cherchē, to and fro;
 Barfote to the cherche they yede,
 To aske mercy for here mysdede.
 ‘Ey,’ thoght the knyght, ‘long ys gone,
 That messe at the cherchē herd y none.
 what so ever God wyl for me werche,
 y wyl ryse, and go to the cherche.’
 He drogh of hys hosyn and hys shone,
 And ded the gatys be on-done.

cuntek, enmity swyche, such slo, slay Algate, Thus ychē, same
 drogh, withdrew Tho, There yede, went werche, ordain ded, caused
 gatys, gates

Barfote he yede, as ys the acyse,
 To cherche, for to herë Goddys servyse.
 And as he the wey to the cherchë name,
 The chylde, hys enmye, ayens hym came,
 And seyd, ‘treytur, now shalt thou deye,
 And my fadyr deth ful dere a-beye;
 No wurldës gode ne shal the save,
 That thou the deth of me shalt have.’
 The knyght say nonë outhere bote,
 But fel on knees byfore hys fote,
 And seyd, ‘have on me mercy
 For hym that lyght yn the vyrgyne mary,
 And suffred deth on the rodë tre
 Thys day, to save bothe the and me,
 And forgave hem that hys blode spylte;
 Ryght so forgyve thou me my gylte;
 y am as a presun here yn thys place,
 y putte me now alle yn thy grace;
 That goddys grace be on the lent
 At the day of Iugëment!’
 Thys chylde, that was hys enmye,
 herde hym prey so rufullly,
 And seyd, ‘syn thou hast me besought
 For Ihesu love that dere us boght,
 And for hys modyr love so dere,
 For hem y graunte the my pes here.’
 Thys ychë chylde down swythe alyghte,
 And yn gode lovë kest the knyght;
 ‘Now are we frendys, that ere were wrothe,
 Go we nowe to the cherchë bothe,
 yn gode love, and parfyte charyte,
 For hys sake that ordeyned pes to be.’

The knyght was glad, and no ferly,
 And so were al that cumpayne,
 That he forgave hym hys mysdede,
 And to the cherchë bothe they yede.
 Byfore the cros they knelyd downe
 yn the wurschyp of Ihesu passyowne,

acyse, law (assize) name, took bote, good presun, prisoner pes, peace
 swythe, quickly kest, kissed ferly, wonder

For to kesse the cros that day,
 As custume ys yn crystyn lay.
 The elder knyght, for honoure,
 Yede fyrst, and kyst hys créature;
 Aftyr than, yedë the chylde,
 That was becomë meke and mylde;
 wyth the tokene he gan hym blesse,
 And kneled down, the cros to kesse.
 The crucyfyx, that there was leyd,
 hys armës fro the cros upbreyd,
 And clepd the chyldë hym betwyx,
 And aftyrward kyst hym, that crucyfyx.

Alle the parshe, bothe olde and yonge,
 Parseyved, and say, that clyppynge,
 And how the crucyfyx hym kyste;
 They sagh hyt alle, and weyl hyt wyste.
 Alle they thanked swete Ihesu

Of that myrácle and that vertu.
 Of thys chylde was grete selkouthe
 That the crycyfyx kyst wyth mouthe.
 Notheles, forsothe and ywys,
 Y trowe that yn hys herte were moche blys;
 And al the folke that sagh thys thyng
 Made to God grete thankynge.

Robert of Brunne's Handlyng Synne, ed. F. J. FURNIVALL (E.E.T.S. 119, 123), 1901, 1903.

lay, law

upbreyd, uplifted

clepd, clasped

selkouthe, marvel

ADAM DAVY, DAN MICHEL, WILLIAM OF SHOREHAM

C. H. E. L. 1. 352-356. 'The literary activity of the south-east of England during this time was less remarkable than that of the west and north; nevertheless, three writers of some importance...call for mention.' Adam Davy's *Five Dreams about Edward II* (c. 1310), a poem of 166 lines in octosyllabic couplets, contained, with other poems, in MS Bodl. Laud 622, is some-

thing of a curiosity in the obscurity of its meaning and purpose, but it has not much literary importance.

Adam, þe marchal, of stretforde-atte-bowe,
Wel swiþe wide his name is yknowe,

naturally wrote in a south-eastern dialect. A few lines will be enough to indicate his quality.

Ich mette of hym anoþere fair metyng:
To oure lorde of heuene ich telle þis,
þat my sweuene tourne to mychel blis.
Me þowþt he rood vpon an Asse—
And þat ich take god to witnesse!—
ywonden he was in a Mantel gray;
Toward Rome he nom his way;
Vpon his heuede sat an gray hure;
It semed hym wel a mesure;
he rood wiþouten hose & sho,—
his wone was nouȝt so forto do;—
his shankes semeden al blood rede;
Myne herte wop for grete drede;
Als a pilgryme he rood to Rome,
And þider he com wel swiþe sone.

Dan Michel's *Ayenbite of Invit* (*i.e.* The Remorse of Conscience) translated from the *Somme des Vices et des Vertus* about 1340 is philological rather than literary in its interest. It is an excellent example of the Kentish dialect. The version of the creed will be enough to illustrate the language.

Credo

Ich leve ine god / vader almiȝti. makere of hevene / and of erþe. And ine
iesu crist / his zone on-lepi / oure lhord. þet y-kend is / of þe holy gost.
y-bore of Marie Mayde. y-pyned onder pouns pilate. y-nayled a rode. dyad.
and be-bered. yede doun to helle. þane þridde day a-ros vram þe dyade.
Stea; to hevenes. zit aþe riȝt half of god þe vader al-miȝti. þannes to comene
he is / to derme þe quike / and þe dyade. Ich y-leve ine þe holy gost. holy
cherche generalliche. Mennesse of halȝen. Lesnesse of zennes. of vlesse
arizinge. and lyf evrelestinde. zuo by hyt.

William of Shoreham is so known from his rectory of Shoreham, near Sevenoaks. He is, from the literary point of view, a more interesting person than Adam or Michel. One of the remarkable facts about his work is that though the surviving seven poems 'treat of the favourite themes of the mediæval homilist, they take the form of lyrical measures,' and are by no means unfavourable specimens of sacred poetry. The quotations given are taken from the second poem—adaptations from the service-book (*c. 1330*).

*Pater noster. God, atente to my socour. Lord, hyghe, etc.
Deus in adjutorium meum. Domine ad. Hora prima.*

At prime Jhesus was i-led
To-fore syre Pylate,
Thar wytnesses false and fele
By-lowen hyne for hate.

In thane nekke hy hene smyte,
Bonden hys honden of myghte;
By-spet hym that swete semblant
That hevene and erthe a-lyghtte.

Adoramus te Christe. We the honoureth, etc. Domine Jhesu Christe. We the biddeth, Jhesu Cryst. Ave Maria, etc.

O swete levedy, wat the was wo
A Gode Frydayes morwe,
Tho al the nyght y-spended was
In swete Jhesues sorwe.

Thou seghe hyne hyder and thyder y-cached,
Fram Pylate to Herode;
So me bete hys bare flesche,
That hyt arne alle a-blode.

And ase he tholed that for ous,
Levedy, withoute crye,
Schelde ous wanne we deade beth
Fram alle feenden mestrye.

*Pater noster. Deus in adjutorium. God, atende to my socour.
Crucifige, etc.*

Crucyfige! crucifige!
Gredden hy at ondre;
A pourpre cloth hi dede hym on,
A scorne an hym to wondre.

Hy to-steke hys swete hefed
Wyth one thornene coroune;
Toe Calvarye his crouche ha beer
Wel reuliche out of the toune.

*Adoramus te. We the honoureth, Jhesu Cryst. Ut supra.
Domine Jhesu Christe. We the byddeth, Jhesu Cryst. Ave Maria,
etc.*

O swete levedy, wat the was wo
Tho that me Jhesus demde,
Tho that me oppone hys swete body
The hevye crouche semde!

To bere hyt to Calvary
I-wys hyt was wel wery,
For so to-bete and so to-boned,
Hyt was reweleche and drery.

And also he tholede that for ous,
Levedy, a thyssse wyse,
I-schelde ous, wanne we dede beth,
Fram alle fendene jewyse.

*Deus, in adjutorium. Gode, atende to my socotur. Pater noster.
Hora sexta.*

On crouche y-nayled was Jhesus
Atte sixghte tyde,
Stronge theves hengen hy on
Eyther half hys syde.

Ine hys pyne hys stronge therst
Stanchede hy wyth galle;
So that Godes holy lombe
Of senne wesche ous alle.

*Adoramus te Christe. We the honoureth, Jhesu Cryst. Oremus.
Domine Jhesu Christe. We the biddeth, Jhesu Cryst. Ave Maria,
gratia plena.*

O swete levedy, wat the was wo
Tho thy chyld was an-honge,
I-tached to the harde tre
Wyth nayles gret and longe!

The Gywes gradden, ‘com adoun,’
Hy neste wat y mende,
For thran ha tholede to be do
To deth for mankende.

And ase he henge, levedy, for ous,
 A-heye oppon the hulle,
 I-scheld ous wane we deade ben,
 That we ne hongy in helle. Amen.

The Religious Poems of William de Shoreham
 (E.E.T.S., Extra Series, LXXXVI).

LAURENCE MINOT

C.H.E.L. i. 356. Very different from Davy's patriotic *Dreams* are the patriotic poems of Laurence Minot, written in the northern dialect during the period 1333-1352. Minot's theme is the famous victories of Edward III, from the battle of Halidon Hill (1333) to the capture of Guisnes (1352). There are eleven poems, all straightforward and vigorous in the style of patriotism that sings quite unabashed 'my country, right or wrong.' Minot's belief in the English, his excuses for their occasional failures and his contempt for the enemy—Scot or French or Flemish—no doubt ensured his popularity in the camps, where he entertained the troops as a professional gleeman. Minot is most interesting as the first example of a militant patriotism that had, by his time, become definitely English.

EDWARD III

Edward, oure cumly king,
 In Braband has his woning,
 With mani cumly knight;
 And in that land, trewly to tell,
 Ordanis he still for to dwell,
 To time he think to fight.

Now God, that es of mightes maste,
 Grant him grace of the Haly Gaste
 His heritage to win!

And Mari moder, of mercy fre,
 Save oure king and his menye
 Fro sorow, and schame, and syn!

Thus in Braband has he bene—
 Whare he bifore was seldom sene—
 For to prove thaire japes;
 Now no langer wil he spare,
 Bot unto Fraunce fast will he fare,
 To confort him with grapes.

menye, *retinue*

japes, *tricks*

grapes, *see Song of Sol. ii. 5*

Furth he ferd into France;
 God save him for mischance,
 And all his company!
 The nobill duc of Braband
 With him went into that land,
 Redy to lif or dy.

Than the riche floure de lice
 Wan thare ful litill prise;—
 Fast he fled for ferde.
 The right aire of that cuntry
 Es cumen, with all his knightes fre,
 To schac him by the berd.

Sir Philip the Valayse,
 Wit his men in tho dayes,
 To bataile had he thought:
 He bad his men tham purvay
 Withowten lenger delay;
 Bot he ne held it noght.

He broght folk ful grete wone,
 Ay sevyn organis one,
 That ful wele wapnid were;
 Bot sone, when he herd ascry
 That King Edward was nere tharby,
 Than durst he noght cum nere.

In that morning fell a myst,
 And when oure Ingliss men it wist,
 It changed all thaire chere;
 Oure king unto God made his bone,
 And God sent him gude confort sone—
 The weder wex ful clere.

Oure king and his men held the felde
 Stalwartly, with spere and schelde,
 And thought to win his right,
 With lordes, and with knightes kene,
 And other doghthy men bydene,
 That war ful frek to fight.

ferde, fear aire, heir Valayse, *Valois* (*Philippe VI*) purvay, prepare
 wone, many wapnid, *weaponed* ascry, *report* bone, *prayer*
 bydene, together frek, *eager*

When Sir Philip of France herd tell
 That King Edward in feld walld dwell,
 Than gayned him no gle;
 He traisted of no better bote,
 Bot both on hors and on fote
 He hasted him to flee.
 It semid he was ferd for strokes
 When he did fell his grete okes
 Obout his pavilyoune;
 Abated was than all his pride,
 For langer thare durst he noght bide,
 His bost was broght all dounie.
 The king of Beme had cares colde,
 That was ful hardy and bolde
 A stede to amstride.
 He and the king als of Naverne
 War fain for ferd in the ferne
 Thaire heviddes for to hide.
 And leves wele—it es no lye—
 The felde hat Flemangrye
 That King Edward was in,
 With princes that war stiff ande bolde,
 And dukes that war doghty tolde,
 In batayle to begin.
 The princes that war riche on raw,
 Gert nakers strike, and trumpes blaw,
 And made mirth at thaire might;
 Both alblast and many a bow
 War redy railed opoun a row,
 And ful frek for to fight.
 Gladly thai gaf mete and drink,
 So that thai suld the better swink—
 The wight men that thar ware.
 Sir Philip of Fraunce fled for dout,
 And hied him hame with all his rout;
 Coward, God giff him care!

traisted of, *expected* bote, *good* Beme, *Bohemia* amstride, *bestride*
 Naverne, *Navarre* ferne, *ferns* hat, *was called* raw, *row*
 Gert nakers, *Caused drums* alblast, *crossbow* swink, *toil* wight, *stout*

For thare than had the lely flowre
 Lorn all halely his honowre,
 That sogat fled for ferd;
 Bot oure King Edward come ful still,
 When that he trowed no harm him till,
 And keped him in the berde.

The Poems of Laurence Minot, ed. JOSEPH HALL.

Lorn, *Lost* halely, *wholly* sogat, *thus* keped, *seized*

MADONNA AND CHILD

I syng-a of a mayden
 That is makeles,
 Kyng of alle kynges
 To her sone she ches.

He cam also stylle
 Ther his moder was,
 As dew in Apryll
 That fallyt on the gras.

He cam also stylle
 To his moderes bowr,
 As dew in Aprille
 That fallyt on the flour.

He cam also stylle
 There his moder lay,
 As dew in Aprille
 That fallyt on the spray.

Moder and maydyn
 Was never non but she,
 Wel may swych a lady
 Godes moder be.

MS Sloane 2593: 15th century.

I syng a of a myde. i' to mafesoo
 Kyng of alle kyngs. to his sonds tho cheo
 he ca also kyng. i' his mod' dano
 do doth in akyng. i' fallyt on y gya
 he can also kyng. to his mode of balle
 do doth in akyng. i' fallyt on y floe
 he can also kyng. i' his mod' say
 do doth in akyng. i' fallyt on y suay
 mod' a maydyn. that nocht no but cheo
 Gol may felveth a lady. gods mod' bo

I haue a gentil cook. cosbyt mo day
 he dor mo wsyn only. my matyme for to say
 I haue a gentil cook. comy he is of gret
 his comibis of good copol. his tayl is of gret
 I haue a gentyl cook. comy he is of kynde
 his comibis of god stoyol. his tayl is of quide
 his legges ben of asore. so gentyl & p[er]suale
 his spiss am of sylle qibyt in to yerd to wale
 his eyny am of cristal. loky al manbyre
 & only nytt he p[er]chit hy. in my ladyis chambry

Onnes godes plaudite
 I sare myny hysdes sety on aty
 he toky hys fleyst & folly away
 est ogo dixi hys god day
 many wytte fedell hert i' pye
 may no mos syng my lyfis am so dyse

LATER TRANSITION ENGLISH SONGS, SATIRES, STORIES

SUMER IS I-CUMEN IN

C. H. E. L. I. 360-371. It would be difficult to find at any point in the whole range of modern English literature any mark of native character not shown, however faintly, at the furthest extreme. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the general body of Middle English lyric poetry. The earliest songs have the note of the latest—delight in earth and air and sun, in grass and flower and tree, in laughter, love and tenderness. The English spring is as fickle, as enchanting and as provocative to the singer in the thirteenth century as to the singer in the twentieth. And to this joy in the general wonder of things was joined the Englishman's abiding resentment of injustice and his tendency to voice his discontent in song or story—his tendency, that is, to secure reform by general persuasion rather than by particular revolution. The social wrongs that moved Shelley and William Morris in the nineteenth century just as surely moved the nameless writers of six hundred years before. With this native sturdiness and rough gaiety is found, too, a sense of personal (rather than collective) religion. The Englishman's modern hymn has its counterpart in the older sacred songs.

It is worth remark that among the first of surviving English lyrics is one that was meant to be sung. It exists, indeed, rather as song than as poem, for the only manuscript is a piece of music—the famous Reading Rota or Round, a miracle of counterpoint, in which four equal voices sing in strict imitation ('canon at the unison'), each voice entering four measures after the preceding. There is as well a 'burden' held by two additional voices, also in imitation. The tune itself is joyous and delightful—one might say quite modern. No one can explain how such an isolated piece of faultless part-writing occurs so early in musical history. The MS was found at Reading. The cuckoo, which sings of sorrow in *The Seafarer*, is here (and henceforth) the herald of spring delights.

Sumer is icumen in,
Lhude sing cuccu;
Groweth sed, and bloweth med,
And springth the wde nu.
Sing, cuccu!

Sing, cuccu, nu! Sing, cuccu!
Sing, cuccu! Sing, cuccu, nu!

bloweth, blooms

wde, wood

Awe bleteth after lomb,
 Lhouth after calve cu;
 Bulluc sterteth, bucke verteth;
 Murie sing, cuccu!
 Cuccu! cuccu!
 Wel singes thu, cuccu;
 Ne swik thu naver nu.

MS Harl. 978: c. 1230.

Awe, *Ewe* Lhouth, *Lows* sterteth, *frisks*
 verteth, *runs to the greenwood* swik, *cease*

SECULAR LYRICS

This and several of the following songs are found in a manuscript in the British Museum (Harl. 2253). They were printed by Thomas Wright, who says, ‘it is most probable that they were all of them current during the reign of Edward I and had been collected by the writer of the manuscript’ [c. 1305]. See *Specimens of Lyric Poetry*, ed. Wright (Percy Society, 1842), and Böddeker: *Altenglische Dichtungen des MS Harl. 2253*.

ALYSOUN

Bytuene Mersh and Averil,
 When spray biginneth to springe,
 The lutel foul hath hire wyl
 On hyre lud to syng.
 Ich libbe in love-longinge
 For semlokest of alle thinge;
 He may me blisse bringe,
 Icham in hire baundoun.

An hendy hap ichabbe yhent,
Ichot from hevene it is me sent,
From alle wymmen mi love is lent,
And lyht on Alysoun.

On hyre lud, *In her own voice* libbe, *live* semlokest, *loveliest*
 baundoun, *power* hendy hap, *gentle lot* yhent, *won* lent, *diverted*
 lyht, *has lighted*

On heu hire her is fayr ynoh,
 Hire browe broune, hire eye blake;
 With lossum chere he on me loh;
 With middel smal and wel ymake;
 Bote he me wolle to hire take,
 For te buen hire owen make,
 Longe to lyven ichulle forsake,
 And feye fallen adoun.

Nihtes when y wende and wake,
 Forthi myn wonges waxeth won;
 Levedi, al for thine sake
 Longinge is ylent me on.
 In world nis non so wyter mon
 That al hire bounte telle con;
 Hire swyre is whittore then the swon,
 And feyrest may in toune.

Icham for wowyng al forwake,
 Wery so water in wore.
 Lest eny reve me my make,
 Ychabbe y-yerned yore.
 Betere is tholien whyle sore
 Then mournen evermore.
 Geynest under gore,
 Herkne to my roun.

*An hendy hap ichabbe yhent,
 Ichot from hevene it is me sent,
 From alle wymmen mi love is lent,
 And lyht on Alysoun.*

THE LENTEN SEASON

Lenten ys come with love to toune,
 With blosmen and with briddes roune,
 That al this blisse bryngeth;

On heu, *In colour* loh, *laughed* middel, *waist* Bote, *Unless* buen, *be*
make, mate lyven, *live* feye, stricken Forthi, *For this* wonges, *cheeks*
wyter, wise swyre, *neck* wowyng, *wooing* forwake, *tired out* so, *as*
wore, weir reve me, *rob me of* y-yerned yore, *yearned long*
tholien whyle sore, to endure for a time Geynest, *Loveliest* gore, *garment*
roun, song to toune, *in due season* roune, *song*

Dayes-eyes in this dales,
 Notes suete of nyhtegales;
 Uch foul song singeth.
 The threstelcoc him threteth oo,
 Away is huere wynter woo,
 When woderove springeth.
 This foules singeth ferly fele,
 Ant wlyteth on huere wynter wele,
 That al the wode ryngeth.
 The rose rayleth hire rode;
 The leves on the lyhte wode
 Waxen al with wille.
 The mone mandeth hire bleo;
 The lilie is lossom to seo,
 The fenyl and the fille.
 Wowes this wilde drakes,
 Miles murgeth huere makes,
 Ase strem that striketh stille;
 Mody meneth, so doth mo;
 Ichot ycham on of tho,
 For love that likes ille.
 The mone mandeth hire lyht;
 So doth the semly sonne bryht,
 When briddes singeth breme.
 Deawes donketh the dounes;
 Deores writh huere derne rounes,
 Domes for te deme;
 Wormes woweth under cloude;
 Wymmen waxeth wounder proude,
 So wel hit wol hem seme.
 Yef me shal wonte wille of on,
 This worldes weole y wole forgon,
 Ant wyht in wode be fleme.

Dayes-eyes, *Daisies* threteth, *urges* [outsings?] oo, ever huere, their
 woo, grief woderove, *woodruff* ferly fele, wondrously much wlyteth,
 look back wele, condition rayleth, puts on rode, colour mandeth, sends
 forth bleo, light fille, *chervil* Wowes, *Woos* Miles, Animals
 murgeth, delight makes, mates striketh stille, flows still Mody
 meneth, *The moody lament* mo, others semly, goodly Deawes donketh,
Dews drench Deores, *Lovers* writh, betray derne rounes, secret
 murmurs Domes for te deme, *Feelings to disclose* cloude, *clod* wonte
 wille, lack my will weole, *weal* wyht, bold fleme, banished

BLOW, NORTHERN WIND

Ichet a burde in boure bryht,
 That fully semly is on syht,
 Menskful maiden of myht,
 Feir ant fre to fonde;
 In al this wurhliche won,
 A burde of blod and of bon
 Never yete y nuste non
 Lussomore in londe.

Blow, northerne wynd,
Send thou me my suetyng!
Blow, northerne wynd,
Blou! blou! blou!

With lokkes lefliche and longe,
 With frount and face feir to fonde,
 With murthes monie mote heo monge,
 That brid so breme in boure;
 With lossom eye, grete ant gode,
 With brownen blysfol under hode,
 He that reste him on the rode
 That leflich lyf honoure!

Hire lure lumes liht
 Ase a launterne a nyht,
 Hire bleo blykyeth so bryht;
 So feyr heo is ant fyn.
 A suetly suyre heo hath to holde,
 With armes, shuldre, ase mon wolde,
 Ant fyngres feyре forte folde;
 God wolde hue were myn!

Middel heo hath menskful smal;
 Hire loveliche chere as cristal;
 Thehes, legges, fet, ant al,
 Ywraht is of the beste.

burde, maiden Menskful, Worshipful fre, charming fonde, prove
 wurhliche won, worldly dwelling nuste non, knew not any Lussomore,
 More lovesome lefliche, lovely murthes, revels heo monge, offer herself
 brid, bird breme, bright lure, face lumes, shines bleo, countenance
 blykyeth, gleams suetly, sweet suyre, neck Middel, Waist
 menskful, rightfully Ywraht, Wrought

A lussum ledy lasteles
 That sweting is, and ever wes;
 A betere burde never nes
 Yheryed with the heste.

Heo is dereworthe in day,
 Graciouse, stout, and gay,
 Gentil, jolyf so the jay,
 Worhliche when heo waketh.
 Maiden murgest of mouth;
 Bi est, bi west, by north and south,
 Ther nis fithele ne crouth
 That such murthes maketh.

Heo is coral of godnesse,
 Heo is rubie of ryhtfulnesse,
 Heo is cristal of clannesse,
 Ant baner of bealte;
 Heo is lilie of largesse,
 Heo is parvenke of prouesse,
 Heo is solsecle of suetnesse,
 Ant ledy of lealte.

To love, that leflich is in londe,
 Y tolde him, as ych understande,
 Hou this hende hath hent in honde
 On huerte that myn wes;
 Ant hire knyhtes me han so soht,
 Sykyng, sorewyng, ant thoht,
 Tho thre me han in bale broht,
 Ayeyn the poer of pees.

To love y putte pleyntes mo,
 Hou sykyng me hath siwed so,
 Ant eke thoht me thrat to slo,
 With maistry yef he myhte;
 Ant serewe sore in balful bende,
 That he wolde for this hende
 Me lede to my lyves ende,
 Unlahfulliche in lyhte.

lasteles, *faultless* Yheryed, *Praised* heste, *highest* dereworthe, *of high worth*
 stout, *stately* so, *as* Worhliche, *Noble* murgest, *merriest*
 fithele, *fiddle* crouth, *crowd [stringed instrument]* parvenke, *periwinkle*
 solsecle, *heliotrope* To love, *to Cupid* hent, *seized* Sykyng, *Sighing*

Love me lustnede uch word,
 Ant beh him to me over bord,
 Ant bed me hente that hord,
 Of myne huerte hele;
 Ant bisecheth that swete ant swote,
 Er then thou falle ase fen of fote,
 That heo with the wolle of bote
 Dereworthliche dele.

For hire love y carke ant care,
 For hire love y droupne ant dare,
 For hire love my blisse is bare,
 Ant al ich waxe won;
 For hire love in slep y slake,
 For hire love al nyght ich wake,
 For hire love mournyng y make
 More then eny mon.

IN APRIL

When the nyhtegale singes, the wodes waxen grene,
 Lef ant gras ant blosme springes in Averyl, y wene;
 Ant love is to myn herte gon with one spere so kene,
 Nyht ant day my blod hit drynkes, myn herte deth to tene.

Ich have loved al this yer, that y may love na more;
 Ich have siked moni syk, lemmون, for thin ore;
 Me nis love never the ner, ant that me reweth sore;
 Suete lemmون, thench on me, ich have loved the yore.

Suete lemmون, y preye thee of love one speche;
 Whil y lyve in world so wyde other nulle y seche.
 With thy love, my suete leof, my blis thou mihtes eche;
 A suete cos of thy mouth mihte be my leche.

Suete lemmون, y preye thee of a love-bene:
 Yef thou me lovest, ase men says, lemmون, as y wene,
 Ant yef hit thi wille be, thou loke that hit be sene;
 So muchel y thenke upon the that al y waxe grene.

*hord, treasure fen of fote, mud from foot wolle of bote, desire to remedy
 droupne, droop dare, fade deth to tene, compels to tears lemmون, sweetheart
 ore, mercy never the ner, no nearer yore, long nulle, will not leof, dear
 eche, increase cos, kiss leche, healer love-bene, love-boon grene, pale*

Bituene Lyncolne ant Lyndeseye, Norhamptoun ant Lounde,
 Ne wot y non so fayr a may, as y go fore ybounde.
 Suete lemmone, y preye the thou lovie me a stounde;
 y wole mone my song on wham that hit ys on ylong.

WITH LONGING

With longyng y am lad,
 On molde y waxe mad,
 A maide marreth me;
 y grede, y grone, unglad,
 For selden y am sad
 That semly forte se.
 Levedi, thou rewe me,
 To routhe thou hastest me rad;
 Be bote of that y bad,
 My lyf is long on the.
 Levedy of alle londe,
 Les me out of bonde,
 Broht ich am in wo;
 Have resting on honde,
 And send thou me thi sonde
 Sone, er thou me slo;
 My reste is with the ro;
 Thah men to me han onde,
 To love nul y noht wonde,
 Ne lete for non of tho.
 Levedi, with al my miht,
 My love is on the liht,
 To menske the when y may;
 Thou rew and red me ryht;
 To deth thou hastest me diht,
 Y deye longe er my day;
 Thou leve upon mi lay.

ybounde, *in bondage* stounde, *time* on wham that hit ys on ylong, *to whom it belongs* lad, led molde, earth grede, cry sad, satisfied routhe, sorrow rad, brought bote, remedy bad, bore long, dependent resting, relief sonde, message ro, wild deer onde, jealousy wonde, refrain lete, cease liht, lighted menske, honour Thou leve, Believe thou

Treuthe ichave the plyht,
To don that ich have hyht
Whil mi lif leste may.

Lylie-whyt hue is,
Hire rode so rose on rys,
That reveth me mi rest.
Wymmon war and wys,
Of prude hue bereth the pris,
Burde on of the best.
This wommon woneth by west,
Brihest under bys;
Hevene y tolde al his
That o nyght were hire gest.

SWETE BRYD

A wayle whyt as whalles bon,
A grein in golde that godly shon,
A tortle that min herte is on,
 in tounes trewe;
Hire gladshipe nes never gon,
 whil y may glewe.

When heo is glad,
Of al this world namore y bad,
Then beo with hire myn one bistad,
 with-oute strif;
The care that icham yn y-brad,
 y wyte a wyf.

A wyf nis non so worly wroht,
When heo ys blythe to bedde y-broht,
Wel were him that wiste hire thoht,
 that thryven ant thro,
Wel y wot heo nul me noht,
 myn herte is wo.

hyht, said hue, she reveth, robs war, wary prude, splendour
 bys, byssus (linen) tolde, should reckon o, one gest, guest

Hou shal that lefly syng,
 That thus is marred in mournyng?
 Heo me wol to deth bryng,
 longe er my day.
 Gret hire wel, that swete thyng,
 with eyenen gray.

Hyre heye haveth wounded me y wisse
 Hire bende browen that bringeth blisse.
 Hire comely mouth that mihte cusse,
 in muche murthe he were;
 Y wolde chaunge myn for his,
 that is here fere.

Wolde hyre fere beo so freo,
 Ant wurthes were that so myhte beo,
 Al for on y wolde yeve threo,
 with-oute chep,
 From helle to hevene ant sonne to see
 nys non so yeep,
 ne half so freo,
 Whose wole of love be trewe,
 do lystne me.

Herkneth me, y ou telle,
 In such wondryng for wo y welle,
 Nys no fur so hot in helle,
 al to mon,
 That loveth derne ant darnout telle
 whet him ys on.

Ich unne hire wel ant heo me wo;
 Ycham hire frend ant heo my fo;
 Me thuncheth min herte wol breke a two,
 for sorewe ant syke!
 In Godes greeting mote heo go,
 that wayle whyte.

Ich wold ich were a threstelcok,
 A bountynge other a laverok,
 swete bryd!
 Bituene hire curtel ant hire smok
 y wolde ben hyd.

SACRED LYRICS

An example of the religious lyric has already been given in the *Luve Ron* of Thomas de Hales. The following poems of the fourteenth century will further illustrate the 'erotic mysticism' and the intensely personal devotion to Mary and her Son referred to on p. 196.

A SONG TO THE VIRGIN

Of on that is so fayr and briht,
velut maris stella,
 Brighter than the day-is liht,
parens et puella,
 Ic crie to the thou se to me,
 Levedy preye thi sone for me,
tam pia,
 That ic mote come to the,
maria.

Of kare conseil thou ert best,
felix fecundata,
 Of alle very thou ert rest,
mater honorata,
 Bi-sek him wiz milde mod,
 That for ous alle sad is blod,
in cruce,
 That we moten komen til him,
In luce.

Al this world was for-lore,
eva peccatrice,
 Tyl our lord was y-bore,
de te genitrice,
 With ave it went a-way,
 Thuster nyth and comet the day
salutis
 The welle springet hut of the,
virtutis.

kare, sorrowful
ave, *Ave Maria*

sad, shed
Thuster, *Dark*

for-lore, *lost*

Levedi flour of alle thing,
rosa sine spina,
 Thu bere ihesu hevene king,
gratia divina,
 Of alle thu berst the pris,
 Levedi quene of parays,
electa,
 Mayde milde, Moder,
es effecta.

Wel he wot he is thi sone,
ventre quem portasti,
 He wyl nout werne the thi bone,
parvum quem lactasti,
 So hende and so god he his,
 He havet brout ous to blis,
superni,
 That havez hi-dut the foule put,
inferni.

An Old English Miscellany, edited by
 RICHARD MORRIS, LL.D. (E.E.T.S. 49).

A SONG ON THE PASSION

Somer is comen and winter gon,
 this day biginniz to longe,
 and this foules everichon
 Ioye hem wit songe;
 So stronge kare me bint,
 al wit Ioye that is funde
 in londe,
 Al for a child
 that is so milde
 of honde.

That child that is so milde and wlong,
 and eke of grete munde,
 bothe in boskes and in bank,
 isout me havet astunde.

parays, <i>Paradise</i>	werne, <i>refuse</i>	bone, <i>boon</i>	hende, <i>hende</i>	kind	hi-dut, <i>closed</i>
foule put, <i>foul pit</i>	kare, <i>grief</i>	wlong, <i>fine</i>			munde, <i>mind</i>
isout, <i>sought</i>	astunde, <i>for a time</i>				

Ifunde he hevede me,
for an appell of a tre,
ibunde;

He brac the bond
that was so strong,
wit wunde.

that child that was so wilde and wlong
to me a-lute lowe,
fram me to giwes he was sold,
ne cuthen hey him nout cnowe;
do we, sayden he,
naile we him opon a tre
alowe;
Ac arst we
sullen scumi him
athrowe.

Ihesu is the childe name,
king of alle londe;
of the king he meden game
and smiten him wit honde
to fondon him; opon a tre
he yeven him wundes to and thre
mid honden,
of bitter drunk
he senden him
asonde.

det he nom ho rode tre,
the lif of us alle;
ne miitte it nowtt other be,
bote we scolden walle;
and wallen in helle dep
nere nevere so swet
wit alle.

Ifunde he hevede me, *He found me* ibunde, *bound* wunde, *wounds*
a-lute, stooped giwes, *Jews* him nout cnowe, *knew him not* sayden he,
said they Ac arst, *But first* sullen scumi, *will shame* athrowe, *for a time*
he, they he yeven, *they gave* det he nom ho rode tre, *Death he took on*
the rood-tree scolden, *should boil*

ne miitte us
savi castel, tur,
ne halle.

Mayde and Moder that astod,
marie ful of grace,
O hu let the teres al of blod
vallen in the place;
the trace ran of he blod
changedere fles and blod
and face.
he was to-drawe
so dur islawe
in chace.

det he nam, the suete man,
wel heye opon the rode;
he wes hure sunnes everichon
mid is swete blode;
mid flode he lute adun
and brac the yates of that prisun
that stode,
and ches hem out
that there were
gode.

he ros him ene the thridde day,
and sette him on is trone,
he wule come a domes day
to demus everich one.
grone he may and wepen ay,
the man that deiet wit-oute lay,
alone.
grante ous, crist,
wit thin uprist
to gone. Amen.

An Old English Miscellany, edited by
RICHARD MORRIS, LL.D. (E.E.T.S. 49).

miitte, might	savi, save	astod, stood	to-drawe, drawn asunder
so dur islawe, as deer slain	wes, washed	flode, flood	adun, descended
ches, chose	judge us	deiet, dies	lay, law
			uprist, Ascension

I SIGH WHEN I SING

I syke when y singe,
 For sorewe that y se,
 When y with wypinge
 Biholde upon the tre,
 Ant se Jesu, the suete,
 Is herte-blod forlete
 For the love of me.
 Ys woundes waxen wete;
 Thei wepen stille and mete;
 Marie reweth the.
 Hehe upon a doun,
 Ther al folk hit se may,
 A mile from the toune,
 Aboute the midday,
 The rode is up arered;
 His frendes aren afered,
 Ant clyngeth so the clay.
 The rode stand in stone;
 Marie stont hire one,
 Ant seith 'Weylaway!'
 When y the biholde
 With eyhen bryhte bo,
 Ant thi bodi colde,
 Thi ble waxeth blo;
 Thou hengest al of blode
 So hehe upon the rode,
 Bituene theves tuo.
 Who may syke more?
 Marie wepeth sore,
 Ant siht al this wo.

The naylles beth to stronge,
 The smythes are to sleye;
 Thou bledest al to longe,
 The tre is al to heyhe.
 The stones beoth al wete,
 Alas, Jesu the suete!
 For nou frend hast thou non
 Bote Seint Johan mournynde,
 Ant Marie wepynde
 For pyne that the ys on.
 Ofte when y sike
 And makie my mon,
 Wel ille thah me like
 Wonder is hit non;
 When y se honge hehe,
 Ant bittre pynes drehe,
 Jesu, my lemmon.
 His wondes sore smerte;
 The spere al to his herte
 Ant thourh his syde is gon.
 Ofte when y syke,
 With care y am thourh-soht;
 When y wake, y wyke,
 Of serewe is al mi thoht.
 Alas! men beth wode
 That suereth by the rode,
 And selleth him for noht,
 That bohte us out of synne.
 He bring us to wynne
 That hath us duere boht!

DULCIS JESU MEMORIA

Suete Jesu, king of blysse,
 Myn huerte love, min huerte lisse,
 Thou art suete myd y-wisse,
 Wo is him that the shal misse!

Suete Jesu, min huerte lyht,
 Thou art day with-oute nyht,
 Thou yeve me streinthe ant eke myht,
 For-te lovien the a-ryht.

Suete Jesu, min huerte bote,
 In myn huerte thou sete a rote
 Of thi love, that is so swote,
 Ant lene that hit springe mote.

Suete Jesu, min huerte gleem,
 Bryhtore then the sonne beem,
 Y-bore thou were in Bedleheem,
 Thou make me here thi suete dreem.

Suete Jesu, thi love is suete,
 Wo is him that the shall lete!
 Tharefore me shulden ofte the grete,
 With salte teres ant eye wete.

Suete Jesu, kyng of londe,
 Thou make me fer understande,
 That min herte mote fonde,
 Hou suete bueth thi love bonde.

Swete Jesu, loverd myn,
 My lyf, myn huerte, al is thin,
 Undo myn herte ant liht ther-yn,
 Ant wite me from fendes engyn.

Suete Jesu, my soule fode,
 Thin werkes bueth bo suete ant gode,
 Thou bohatest me upon the rode,
 For me thou sheddest thi blode.

Suete Jesu, me reoweth sore,
 Gultes that y ha wrotht yore;
 Tharefore y bidde thin mylse ant ore,
 Merci, lord, ynul na more!

Suete Jesu, loverd God,
 Thou me bohatest with thi blod,
 Out of thin huerte orn the flod,
 Thi moder hit seh that the by stod.

Suete Jesu, bryht ant shene,
 Y preye the thou here my bene,
 Thourh ernding of the hevene quene,
 That my bone be nou sene.

Suete Jesu, berne best,
 With ich hope habbe rest,
 Whether y be south other west,
 The help of the be me nest!

Suete Jesu, wel may him be,
 That the may in blisse se!
 After mi soule let aungles te,
 For me ne gladieth gome ne gle.

Suete Jesu, hevene kyng,
 Feir ant best of alle thyng,
 Thou bring me of this longyng,
 Ant come to the at myn endyng.

Suete Jesu, al folkes reed,
 Graunte ous er we buen ded
 The under-fonge in fourme of bred,
 Ant seththe to heovene thou us led.

WINTER WAKENETH ALL MY CARE

Wynter wakeneth al my care,
 Nou this leves waxeth bare,
 Ofte y sike ant mourne sare,
 When hit cometh in my thoht
 Of this worldes joie, hou hit goth al to noht

Now hit is, ant now hit nys,
 Also hit ner nere y-wys,
 That moni mon seith soth hit ys,
 Al goth bote Godes wille,
 Alle we shule deye, thah us like ylle.

Al that gren me graueth grene,
 Nou hit faleweth al by-dene;
 Jesu, help that hit be sene,
 Ant shild us from helle,
 For y not whider y shal, ne hou longe her duelle.

WHEN I SEE BLOSSOMS SPRING

When y se blosmes springe,
 ant here foules song;
 A suete love-longyng
 myn herte thourh out stong,
 Al for a love newe,
 That is so suete ant trewe,
 that gladieth al my song;
 Ich wot al myd i-wisse
 My joie ant eke my blisse
 on him is al y-long.

When y mi selve stonde,
 ant with myn eyen seo,
 Thurled fot ant honde
 with grete nayles threo;
 Blody wes ys heved,
 On him nes nout bileved
 that wes of peynes freo;
 Wel, wel ohte myn herte
 For his love to smerte,
 ant sike ant sory beo.

Jesu milde ant softe,
 yef me streynthe ant myht,
 Longen sore ant ofte
 to lovye the a-ryht,
 Pyne to tholie ant drehe,

For the sone, Marye,
 thou art so fre ant bryht,
 Mayden ant moder mylde,
 For love of thine childe,
 ernde us hevene lyht.

Alas! that y ne couthe
 turne to him my thoht,
 Ant cheosen him to lemmion,
 so duere he us hath y-boht,
 Withwoundes deope ant stronge,
 With peynes sore ant longe,
 of love ne conne we noht;
 His blod that feol to grounde,
 Of hise suete wounde,
 of peyne us hath y-boht.

Jesu milde ant suete,
 y synge the mi song,
 Ofte y the grete,
 ant preye the among,
 Let me sunnes lete,
 Ant in this lyve bete
 that ich have do wrong;
 At oure lyves ende,
 When we shule wende,
 Jesu us under fong! Amen.

GRATIA PLENA

Blessed be thou, levedy, ful of heovene blisse,
 Suete flur of parays, moder of mildenesse,
 Preye Jesu, thy sone, that he me rede ant wysse,
 So my wey forte gon, that he me never misse.

Of the, suete levedy, my song y wile byginne,
 Thy deore suete sones love thou lere me to wynne;
 Ofte y syke ant serewe among, may y never blynne,
 Levedi, for thi milde mod, thou shilde me from synne.

Myne thothes, levedy, maketh me ful wan,
 To the y crie ant calle, thou here me for thi man;
 Help me, hevene quene, for thyn ever ycham,
 Wisse me to thi deore sone, the weies y ne can.

Levedy, seinte Marie, for thi milde mod,
 Soffre never that y be so wilde ne so wod,
 That ich her for-leose the that art so god,
 That Jesu me to-bohte with is to suete blod.

Bryhte ant shene, sterre cler, lyht thou me ant lere,
 In this false fykel world my selve so to bere,
 That y ner at myn endyng have the feond to fere;
 Jesu, mid thi suete blod thou bohest me so dere.

Levedi, seinte Marie, so fair ant so briht,
 Al myn help is on the bi day ant by nyht;
 Levedi fre, thou shilde me so wel as thou myht,
 That y never for-leose heveriche lyht.

Levedy, seinte Marie, so fayr ant so hende,
 Preye Jesu Crist, thi sone, that he me grace sende,
 So to queme him ant the, er ich henne wende,
 That he me bringe to the blis that is withouten ende.

Ofte y crie merci, of mylse thou art welle,
 Alle buen false that bueth mad bothe of fleyshe ant felle;
 Levedi suete, thou us shild from the pine of helle,
 Bring us to the joie that no tongue hit may of telle.

Jesu Crist, Godes sone, fader ant holy gost,
 Help us at oure nede, as thou hit al wel wost;
 Bring us to thin riche ther is joie most,
 Let us never hit misse for non worldes bost!

THE FIVE JOYS OF MARY

Ase y me rod this ender day,
 By grene wode to seche play,
 Mid herte y thohte al on a may,
 suetest of alle thinge;
 Lythe, ant ich ou telle may
 al of that suete thinge.

This maiden is suete ant fre of blod,
 Briht ant feyr, of milde mod,

Alle heo mai don us god,
 thurh hire bysechynge;
 Of hire he tok fleysh ant blod,
 Jesu hevene kynge.

With al mi lif y love that may,
 He is mi solas nyht ant day,
 My joie ant eke my beste play,
 ant eke my love-longyng;

Al the betere me is that day
 that ich of hire syngē.

Of alle thinge y love hire mest,
 My dayes blis, my nyghtes rest,
 Heo counseileth ant helpeth best
 bothe elde ant yinge;

Now y may yef y wole
 the fif joyes mynge.

The furst joie of that wymman,
 When Gabriel from hevene cam,
 Ant seide God shulde bcome man,
 ant of hire be bore,

Ant bringe up of helle pyn
 monkyn that wes for-lore.

The other joie of that may,
 Wes o Cristesmasse day,
 When God wes bore on thowe lay,
 ant brohte us lyhtnesse;

Theostri wes seie byfore day,
 this hirdes bereth wytnesse.

The thridde joie of that levedy,
 That men clepeth the Epyphany,
 When the kynges come wery,
 to presente hyre sone

With myrre, gold, ant encenz,
 that wes mon bcome.

The furthe joie we telle mawen,
 On Ester morewe wen hit gon dawen,
 Hyre sone that wes slawen,
 aros in fleysh ant bon;

More joie ne mai me haven
 wyf ne mayden non.

The fifte joie of that wymman,
 When hire body to hevene cam,
 The soule to the body nam,
 ase hit wes woned to bene;
 Crist leve us alle with that wymman
 that joie al forte sene.

Preye we alle to oure levedy,
 Ant to the sontes that woneth hire by,
 That heo of us haven merci,
 ant that we ne misse
 In this world to ben holy,
 ant wynne hevene blysse! Amen.

MAIDEN, MOTHER MILD

Mayden moder milde, <i>oiez cel oreysoun;</i> From shome thou me shilde, <i>e de ly mafeloun.</i> For love of thine childe, <i>me menez de tresoun;</i> Ich wes wod ant wilde, <i>ore su en prisoun.</i> Thou art feyr ant fre, <i>e plein de doucour;</i> Of the spong the ble, <i>ly soverein creatour;</i> Mayde, byseche y the, <i>vostre seint socour,</i> Meoke ant mylde, be with me, <i>pur la sue amour.</i> Tho Judas Jesum founde, <i>donque ly beysa;</i> He wes bete ant bounde, <i>que nus tous fourma;</i> Wyde were is wounde, <i>qe le Gyw ly dona;</i> He tholedе harde stounde, <i>mè poi le greva.</i>	On ston ase thou stode, <i>pucele, tot pensaunt,</i> Thou restest the under rode, <i>ton fitz veites pendant;</i> Thou sehe is sides of blode, <i>l'alme de ly partaunt;</i> He ferede uch an fode, <i>en mound que fust vivaunt.</i> Ys siden were sore, <i>le sang de ly cora;</i> That lond wes for-lore, <i>mes il le rechata.</i> Uch bern that wes y-bore, <i>en enfern descenda;</i> He tholedе deth therfore, <i>en ciel puis mounta.</i> Tho Pilat herde the tydynge, <i>molt fu joyous baroun;</i> He lette byfore him brynge <i>Jesu Nazaroun.</i> He was y-crouned kynge, <i>pur nostre redempcioun;</i> Whose wol me synge, <i>avera grant pardoun.</i>
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STABAT MATER

'Stond wel, moder, under rode,
Byhold thy Sone with glade mode;
 Blythe, moder, myht thou be!'
'Sone, hou shulde y blythe stonde?
y se thin fet, y se thin honde,
 Nayled to the harde tre.'

'Moder, do wey thy wepinge;
y thole deth for monkynde,
 For my gult thole y non.'
'Sone, y fele the dede-stounde;
The suert is at myn herte grounde
 That me byhet Symeon.'

'Moder, merci, let me deye,
For Adam out of helle to beye,
 Ant his kun, that is forloie.'
'Sone, what shal me to rede?
My peyne pyneth me to dede,
 Lat me deye the byfore.'

'Moder, thou rewe al of thi bern;
Thou wosshe awai the blody tern,
 Hit doth me worse then my ded.'
'Sone, hou may y teres werne?
Y se the blody stremes erne
 From thin herte to my fet.'

'Moder, nou y may the seye,
Betere is that ich one deye
 Then al monkunde to helle go.'
'Sone, y se thi bodi byswongen,
Fet and honde thourhout stongen;
 No wonder thah me be wo.'

'Moder, nou y shal the telle,
Yef y ne deye, thou gost to helle;
 Y thole ded for thine sake.'
'Sone, thou art so meke and mynde,
Ne wyt me naht, hit is my kynde,
 That y for the this sorewe make.'

‘Moder, nou thou miht wel leren
 Whet sorewe haveth that children beren,
 Whet sorewe hit is with childe gon.’

‘Sorewe, ywis, y con the telle;
 Bote hit be the pyne of helle,
 More serewe wot y non.’

‘Moder, rew of moder-kare,
 For nou thou wost of moder-fare,
 Thah thou be clene mayden on.’
 ‘Sone, help at alle nede
 Alle tho that to me grede,
 Maiden, wif, ant fol wymmon.’

‘Moder, may y no lengore duelle,
 The time is come, y shal to helle;
 The thridde day y ryse upon.’
 ‘Sone, y wil with the be founden,
 Y deye, ywis, for thine wounden,
 So soreweful ded nes never non.’

When he ros, tho fel hire sorewe,
 Hire blisse spong the thridde morewe,
 Blythe, moder, were thou tho!
 Levedy, for that ilke blisse,
 Bysech thi Sone of sunnes lissoe,
 Thou be oure sheld ayeyn oure fo.

Blessed be thou, ful of blysse,
 Let us never hevene misse,
 Thourh thi suete Sones myht.
 Loverd, for that ilke blod,
 That thou sheddest on the rod,
 Thou bryng us into hevene-lyght. *Amen.*

SACRED AND PROFANE LOVE

Lutel wot hit anonymon,
 how love hym haveth y-bounde,
 That for us othe rode ron,
 ant bohte us with is wounde.

The love of him us haveth y-maked sounde,
 Ant y-cast the grimly gost to grounde;
 Ever ant oo, nyht ant day, he haveth us in is thohte,
 He nul nout leose that he so deore bohte.

He bohte us with is holy blod,
 what shulde he don us more?
 He is so meoke, milde, ant good,
 he nagulte nout ther-fore;
 That we han y-don, y rede we reowen sore,
 Ant crien ever to Jesu, ‘Crist, thyn ore.’
 Ever ant oo, niht ant day, etc.

He seh his fader so wonder wroht,
 with mon that wes y-falle,
 With herte sor he seide is oht
 whe shulde abuggen alle;
 His suete sone to hym gon clepe ant calle,
 Ant preiede he moste deye for us alle.
 Ever ant oo, etc.

He brohte us alle from the deth,
 ant dude us frendes dede;
 Suete Jesu of Nazareth,
 thou do us hevene mede;
 Upon the rode, why nulle we taken hede?
 His grene wounde so grimly conne blede.
 Ever ant oo, etc.

His deope wounden bledeth fast,
 of hem we ohte munne;
 He hath ous out of helle y-cast,
 y-broht us out of sunne;
 For love of us his wonges waxeth thunne,
 His herte blod he yef for al monkunne.
 Ever ant oo, etc.

Lutel wot hit anonym,
 hou derne love may stonde;
 Bote hit were a fre wymmon,
 that muche of love had fonde.

The love of hire ne lesteth no wyht longe,
 Heo haveth me plyht, ant wyteth me wyth wronge.
 Ever ant oo, for my leof icham in grete thohnte,
 Y thenche on hire that y ne seo nout ofte.

Y wolde nemne hyre to day,
 ant y dorste hire munne;
 Heo is that feireste may,
 of uch ende of hire kunne;
 Bote heo me love, of me heo haves sunne,
 Who is him that loveth the love that he ne may ner
 y-wynne.
 Ever ant oo, etc.

A-doun y fel to hire anon,
 ant crie, 'ledy, thyn ore!
 Ledy, ha mercy of thy mon!
 lef thou no false lore.
 Yef thou dost, hit wol me reowe sore,
 Love dreccheth me that y ne may lyve namore.'
 Ever ant oo, etc.

Mury hit ys in hyre tour,
 wyth hathelles ant wyth heowes;
 So hit is in hyre bour,
 with gomenes ant with gleowes;
 Bote heo me lovye, sore hit wol me rewe!
 Wo is him that loveth the love that ner nul be trewe!
 Ever ant oo, etc.

Fayrest fode upo loft,
 my gode luef, y the greete,
 Ase fele sythe ant oft
 as dewes dropes beth weete;
 As sterres beth in welkne, ant grases sour ant suete;
 Whose loveth untrewe, his herte is selde seete.
 Ever ant oo, etc.

WRIGHT: *Specimens of Lyric Poetry.*
 BÖDDEKER: *Altenglische Dichtungen.*

POLITICAL POEMS

C. H. E. L. I. 368-371. The invaluable collections of Thomas Wright show how, in early days as in later, verse was the means of expressing popular discontent during troubled times. Of the thirteenth and fourteenth century poems preserved some are in Latin, some in French, and some in English. A few combine two languages, e.g. the *Song against the King's Taxes* (temp. Edward II) voicing the general complaint, not so much against the taxes as against the tax-gratherers. Two out of the sixteen stanzas will exhibit the ingenious combination of French and Latin:

Une chose est contre foy, unde gens gravatur,
Que la meyté ne vient al roy, in regno quod levatur.
Pur ce qu'il n'ad tot l'enter, prout sibi datur,
Le pueple doit le plus doner, et sic sincopatur.
Nam quae taxantur, regi non omnia dantur.

Unquore plus greve à simple gent collectio lanarum,
Que vendre fet communement divitias earum.
Ne puet estre que tiel consail constat Deo carum,
Issi destrure le poverail pondus per amarum,
Non est lex sana, quod regi sit mea lana.

'One thing is against faith, whereby the people is aggrieved, that the half of what is raised in the kingdom does not come to the king. Since he has not the whole, as it is given to him, the people is obliged to give the more, and thus they are cut short; for the taxes which are raised are not all given to the king.'

'The collecting of the wool grieves the common people still more, which drives them commonly to sell their property. Such counsel cannot be acceptable to God, thus to destroy the poor people by a bitter burden. It is not sound law, which gives my wool to the king.'

A song in French (1256) deplores the state of the Church under Henry III's favoured foreigners in words that paraphrase the Lamentation: *Quomodo sedet sola civitas plena populo*:

Or est acumpli à men acient
La pleinte Jeremie, ke oï avez suvent:
 ke dit cument set sole
 cité pleine de fule
Plurant amerement
 ore est sanz mariage
 e mis en tailage,
La dame de la gent.
Cest est saint eglise trestut apertement,
Ke est ja hunie e tut mis a vent:
E si est maumise, nus veum cument.
 Ele gent e plure,
 n'a ad nul ke sucure
De sun marent.

A Latin song of the same date accuses the venal bishops of selling the Divine graces that should be without money and without price:

Jacet ordo clericalis
In respectu laicalis,
Sponsa Christi fit venalis,
Generosa generalis;
 veneunt altaria,
 venit eucharistia,
 cum sit nugatoria
Gratia venalis.

A song in more rugged English (temp. Edward II) denounces the sale of justice in the Consistory Courts:

Furst ther sit an old cherl in a blake hure,
Of all that ther sitteth semeth best syre,
 And leyth ys leg o lonke.
An heme in an herygoud with honginde sleven,
Ant mo then fourti him by-fore my bales to breven,
 In sunnes ȝef y songe:
Heo pynkes with heore penne on heore parchemyn,
Ant sayen y am breved ant y-broht yn
 Of al my weole wlonke.
Alle heo bueth redy myn routhes to rede,
Ther y mot for menske munte sum mede,
 Ant thonkfulliche hem thonke.
Shal y thonke hem ther er y go?
ȝe, the maister ant ys men bo.

A Latin poem of nearly a thousand lines (mid-thirteenth century) on the battle of Lewes is interesting as showing how Simon de Montfort was already canonised in the popular mind:

Benedicat dominus .S. de Monte-Forti!
Suis nichilominus natis et cohorti!
Qui se magnanimitter exponentes morti,
Pugnaverunt fortiter, condolentes sorti
Anglicorum flebili, qui subpeditati
Modo vix narrabili, peneque privati
Cunctis libertatibus, immo sua vita,
Sub duris principibus languerunt ita,
Ut Israelitica plebs sub Pharaone,
Gemens sub tyrannica devastatione.
Sed hanc videns populi Deus agoniam,
Dat in fine seculi novum Mattathiam,
Et cum suis filiis zelans zelum legis,
Nec cedit injuriis nec furori regis.

hure, hat syre, chief leyth, stretches o lonke, along heme, hem herygoud, gown sleven, sleeves bales, evils breven, write sunnes, sins ȝef, if songe, sung pynkes, mark breved, briefed weole wlonke, fair weal routhes, sorrows menske, honour munte, pay mede, bribe

'May the Lord bless Simon de Montfort! and also his sons and his army! who, exposing themselves magnanimously to death, fought valiantly, condoling the lamentable lot of the English who, trodden under foot in a manner scarcely to be described, and almost deprived of all their liberties, nay, of their lives, had languished under hard rulers, like the people of Israel under Pharaoh, groaning under a tyrannical devastation. But God, seeing this suffering of the people, gives at last a new Mattathias, and he with his sons, zealous after the zeal of the law, yields neither to the insults nor to the fury of the king.'

National sorrow for the tragedy of Evesham also voiced itself in service and in song. 'In MS Cotton Vespas. A vi (says Wright) will be found...a form of prayers to be said in his honour, among which is the following hymn'—the allusions can be understood after a reference to the passage already quoted from Robert of Gloucester:

Salve, Simon Montis-Fortis,
 Totius flos militiae,
Duras poenas passus mortis,
 Protector gentis Angliae.
Sunt de sanctis inaudita,
Cunctis passis in hac vita,
 Quemquam passum talia;
Manus, pedes amputari,
Caput, corpus vulnerari,
 Abscidi virilia.
Sis pro nobis intercessor
Apud Deum, qui defensor
 In terris extiteras.

A lament in French, belonging to the early part of the fourteenth century, occurs in MS Harl. 2253. The first of its nine stanzas will indicate its general style:

Chaunter m'estoit, mon cuer le voit, en un dure langage,
Tut en ploraunt fust fet le chaunt de nostre duz baronage,
Que pur la pees, si loynz après se lesserten detrere,
Lur cors trencher, e demembrer, pur salver Engleterre.
Ore est ocys la flur de pris, qe taunt savoit de guere,
Ly quens Montfort, sa dure mort molt enplora la terre.

Not the least unpopular royal person of the time was Henry III's brother Richard Earl of Cornwall, who had been elected titular king of the Romans and crowned at Aix-la-Chapelle. At first a supporter of Simon, he passed over to the Royalist side, and was detested for this and for his foreign ambitions. At Lewes he had taken shelter in a windmill, but was captured.

SONG AGAINST THE KING OF ALMAIGNE

Sitteth alle stille ant herkneth to me:
 The kyng of alemaigne, bi mi leauté,
 Thrittı thousent pound askede he
 For te make the pees in the countré,
 ant so he dude more.

Richard, thah thou be ever trichard,
 tricchen shalt thou never more.

Richard of alemaigne, whil that he wes kyng,
 He spende al is tresour opon swyvyng;
 Haveth he nout of walingford o ferlyng:
 Let him habbe, ase he brew, bale to dryng,
 maugre windesore....

The kyng of alemaigne gederede ys host,
 Makede him a castel of a mulne post,
 Wende with is prude ant is muchele bost,
 Brohte from alemayne mony sori gost
 to store wyndesore.

By God, that is aboven ous, he dude muche synne,
 That lette passen over see the erl of warynne:
 He hath robbed engelond, the mores, ant the fenne,
 The gold, ant the selver, ant y-boren henne,
 for love of wyndesore.

Sire simond de mountfort hath swore bi ys chyn,
 Hevede he nou here the erl of waryn,
 Shulde he never more come to is yn,
 Ne with sheld, ne with spere, ne with other gyn,
 to help of wyndesore....

Be the luef, be the loht, sire edward,
 Thou shalt ride sporeles o thy lyard
 Al the ryhte way to dovere ward;

leauté, <i>faith</i>	trichard, <i>traitor</i>	swyvyng, <i>whoring</i>	ferlyng, <i>furlong</i>
mulne, <i>mill</i>	sori gost, <i>wretched soul</i>	y-boren henne, <i>carried hence</i>	
yn, <i>inn</i>	luef, <i>pleasant</i>	loht, <i>unpleasant</i>	sporeles, <i>spurless</i>
lyard, <i>hack</i>			

Shalt thou never more breke foreward,
 ant that reweth sore:
 Edward, thou dudest ase a sheward,
 forsoke thyn emes lore.
 Richard, thah thou be ever trichard,
 tricchen shalt thou never more.

*The Political Songs of England from the Reign
 of John to that of Edward II*, edited by
 THOMAS WRIGHT (Camden Society, 1839).
 emes, uncle's

SONG OF THE HUSBANDMAN

This song illustrates the feeling against the warlike adventures of Edward I and the taxation thereby occasioned.

Ich herde men upo mold make muche mon,
 Hou he beth i-tened of here tillynge:
 'Gode yeres and corn bothe beth a-gon,
 Ne kepeth here no sawe ne no song synge.
 Now we mote worche, nis ther non other won,
 Mai ich no lengore lyve with my lesinge;
 Yet ther is a bitterore bid to the bon,
 For ever the furthe peni mot to the kynge.

Thus we carpeth for the kyng, and carieth ful colde,
 And weneth for te kevere, and ever buth a-cast;
 Whose hath eny god, hopeth he nout to holde,
 Bote ever the levest we leoseth a-last.

Luther is to leosen ther ase lutel ys,
 And haveth monie hynen that hoieth therto;
 The hayward heteth us harm to habben of his;
 The bailif bockneth us bale and weneth wel do;
 The wodeward waiteth us wo that loketh under rys;
 Ne mai us ryse no rest, rycheis, ne ro.
 Thus me pileth the pore that is of lute pris:
 Nede in swot and in swynk swynde mot swo':

i-tened, wronged sawe, *saw* (*saying*) lesinge, *gleaning* carpeth,
 complain carieth, care weneth, think kevere, recover levest,
 dearest Luther, *Grievous* ther ase, where there hynen, fellows
 heteth, commands bockneth, causes us ryse, to us arise ro, rest
 me pileth, they rob swot, sweat swynk, labour

Nede he mot swynde thah he hade swore,
 That nath nout en hod his hed for te hude.
 Thus wil walketh in lond, and lawe is for-lore,
 And al hath piked of the pore the prikyares prude.

Thus me pileth the pore and pyketh ful clene,
 The ryche raymeth withouten eny ryht;
 Ar londes and ar leodes liggeth fol lene,
 Thorh biddyg of baylyfs such harm hem hath hiht.
 Men of religioum me halt hem ful hene,
 Baroun and bonde, the clerç and the knyht.
 Thus wil walketh in lond, and wondred ys wene,
 Falsshipe fatteth and marreth wyth myht.

Stont fulle y the stude, and halt him ful sturne,
 That maketh beggares go with bordon and bagges.
 Thus we beth honted from hale to hurne;
 That er werede robes, nou wereth ragges.

Yet cometh budeles, with ful muche bost,—
 ‘Greythe me selver to the grene wax:
 Thou art writen y my writ that thou wel wost.’
 Mo then ten sithen told y my tax.
 Thenne mot ych habbe hennen a-rost,
 Feyr on fyhshe day launprey ant lax;
 Forth to the chepyn geyneth ne chost,
 Thah y sulle mi bil ant my borstax.

Ich mot legge my wed wel yef y wolle,
 Other sulle mi corn on gras that is grene.
 Yet I shal be foul cherl, thah he han the fulle,
 That ich alle yer spare, thenne y mot spene.

mot swynde, *must languish* en hod, *a hood* hude, *hide* lawe, *tyranny*
 for-lore, *forgotten* prikyares prude, *horseman's pride* raymeth, *lord it*
 ar leodes liggeth, *their people lie* hiht, *befallen* hene, *abject* wondred
 ys wene, *fear is frequent* Falsshipe, *Falsehood* y the stude, *in the place*
 hale, *hall* hurne, corner er werede, once wore budeles, beadles
 Greythe, *Prepare* grene wax, *king's seal* wost, know sithen, times
 hennen a-rost, *hens roasted* lax, salmon chepyn geyneth, market gets
 chost, cost sulle, sell borstax, axe (*only occurrence of the word*)
 legge my wed, *lay my pledge* the fulle, the whole That, What
 alle yer spare, save all the year

Nede y mot spene that y spared yore,
 Ayeyn this cachereles cometh thus y mot care;
 Cometh the maister budel, brust ase a bore,
 Seith he wole mi bugging bringe ful bare.
 Mede y mot munten a mark other more,
 Thah ich at the set dey sulle mi mare.
 Ther the grene wax us greveth under gore,
 That me us honteth ase hound doth the hare.

He us honteth ase hound hare doht on hulle;
 Seththe y tok to the lond such tene me wes taht.
 Nabbeth ner budeles boded ar fulle,
 For he may scape ant we aren ever caht.

Thus y kippe ant cacche cares ful colde,
 Seththe y counte ant cot hade to kepe;
 To seche selver to the kyng y mi seed soldle,
 Forthi mi lond leye lith ant leorneth to slepe.
 Seththe he mi feire feh fatte y my folde,
 When y thenk o mi weole wel neh y wepe;
 Thus bredeth monie beggares bolde,
 Ant ure ruye ys roted ant ruls er we repe.

Ruls ys oure ruye ant roted in the stre,
 For wickede wederes by brok ant by brynde.
 Ther wakeneth in the world wondred ant wee,
 Ase god is swynden anon as so for te swynke.

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spared yore, saved formerly Ayeyn, By the time cachereles, catchpoles
 brust, roughly bugging, lodging mot munten, must give other, or
 gore, garment (in heart) Seththe, Since tene, pain Nabbeth ner budeles
 boded ar fulle, The beadles have never suffered kippe, take Forthi,
 Wherefore leye lith, lies useless feire feh fatte, fair cattle fetch
 ruye, rye ruls, flat wickede wederes, bad weather wondred, dread
 wee, woe Ase god is swynden anon as so for te swynke, As good to perish
 at once as thus to labour

SONG ON THE FLEMISH INSURRECTION

The general indignation against foreigners and foreign wars in the reign of Edward I did not preclude popular sympathy with the Flemish burghers in their struggle against France. The following vigorous song ‘was composed soon after the battle of Courtrai, in which the Comte d’Artois and his army were defeated and destroyed by the Flemings in 1302’ (Wright). Six out of its seventeen stanzas are quoted.

Lustneth, lordinges, bothe yonge ant olde,
Of the freynsshe-men that were so proude ant bolde,
Hou the flemmyssh-men bohten hem ant solde
 upon a wednesday.

Beter hem were at home in huere londe,
Then for te seche flemmysshe by the see stronde,
Wharethourh moni frenshe wyf wryngeth hire honde,
 ant singeth, weylaway!

The kyng of fraunce made statuz newe
In the lond of flaundres, among false ant trewe,
That the commun of bruges ful sore con arewe,
 ant seiden amonges hem,
‘Gedere we us togedere hardilyche at ene,
Take we the bailifs by tuenty ant by tene,
Clappe we of the hevedes an onen o the grene,
 ant caste we y the fen.’

The webbes ant the fullaris assembled hem alle,
Ant makeden huere consail in huere commune halle;
Token Peter Conyng huere kyng to calle,
 ant beo huere cheventeyn.

Hue nomen huere rouncyns out of the stalle,
Ant closeden the toun withinne the walle;
Sixti baylies ant ten hue maden adoun falle,
 ant moni another sweyn.

Tho wolde the baylies, that were come from fraunce,
Dryve the flemisse that made the destaunce;
Hue turnden hem ayeynes with suerd ant with launce,
 stronge men ant lyht.

nomen, *took* rouncyns, *horses*

Y telle ou for sothe, for al huere bobaunce,
 Ne for the avowerie of the kyng of fraunce,
 Tuenti score ant fyve haden ther meschaunce
 by day ant eke by nyht.

Sire Jakes de Seint Poul y-herde hou hit was;
 Sixtene hundred of horsmen asemblede o the gras;
 He wende toward bruges *pas pur pas*,
 with swithe gret mounde.
 The flemmysshe y-herden telle the cas;
 A-gynneth to clynken huere basyns of bras,
 Ant al hem to-dryven ase ston doth the glas,
 ant fallen hem to grounde.

Sixtene hundred of horsmen hede ther here fyn;
 Hue leyhen y the stretes y-styked ase swyn;
 Ther hue loren huere stedes, ant mony rouncyn,
 thourh huere oune prude.

Sire Jakes ascapede by a coynte gyn,
 Out at one posterne ther me solde wyn,
 Out of the fyhte hom to ys yn,
 in wel muchele drede....

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bobaunce, boasting	avowerie, protection	mounde, multitude	basyns,
helmets	fyn, end	y-styked, stuck	coynte gyn, cunning trick

A SONG ON THE TIMES

The following song seems to have been popular at the beginning of the fourteenth century. ‘The wolf and the fox pourtray exactly the characters of the two classes of people who then oppressed and plundered the middle and lower classes’ (Wright). The poem contains twenty-five stanzas, of which sixteen are quoted.

Whose thenchith up this carful lif,
 Nighte and dai that we beth inne,
 So moch we seeth of sorow and strif,
 And lite ther is of worldis winne,

Whose, *Whoso*

Hate and wreth ther is wel rive,
 And trew love is ful thinne:
 Men that beth in heiighist live
 Mest i-charged beth with sinne.
 Fals and lither is this lond,
 As al dai we mai i-se:
 Therin is bothe hate and onde,—
 Ic wene that ever so wol be.
 Coveitise hath the law an honde,
 That the trewthe he ne mai i-se:
 Nou is maister pride and onde;—
 Alas! Loverde, whi suffrith he?...
 Thos kingis ministris beth i-schend,
 To right and law that ssold tak hede,
 And al the lond for t' amend,
 Of thos thevis hi taketh mede.
 Be the lafful man to deth i-brought,
 And his catel awei y-nom;
 Of his deth ne tellith hi noght,
 Bot of har prei hi hab som.
 Hab hi the silver, and the mede,
 And the catel under-fo,
 Of felonii hi ne taketh hede,
 Al thilk trepas is a-go.
 Of thos a vorbisen ic herd telle;
 The Lyon is king of all beeste,
 And—herknith al to mi spelle—
 In his lond he did an heste.
 The Lyon lete cri, as hit was do,
 For he hird lome to telle;
 And eke him was i-told also
 That the wolf didde noghte welle.
 And the fox, that lither grome,
 With the wolf, i-wreiid was;
 To-for har lord hi schold come,
 To amend har trepas.

lither, wicked onde, strife i-schend, corrupted ssold, should catel, property y-nom, taken under-fo, received vorbisen, fable heste, command lome, frequently lither grome, wicked fellow i-wreiid, accused To-for, Before

And so men didde that seli asse,
 That trepasid noght, no did no gilte,
 With ham bothe i-wreiid was,
 And in the ditement was i-pilt.
 The voxē hird amang al menne,
 And told the wolf with the brode crune;
 That on him send gees and henne,
 That other geet and motune.
 The seli aasse wend was saf,
 For he ne eete noght bote grasse;
 None giftes he ne gaf,
 Ne wend that no harm nassee.
 Tho hi to har lord com to tune,
 He told to ham law and skille;
 Thos wikid bestis luid a-dune,
 ‘Lord,’ hi seiid, ‘what is thi wille?’
 Tho spek the Lion hem to,
 To the fox anone his wille,—
 ‘Tel me, boi, what hast i-do?
 Men beth aboute the to spille.’
 Tho spek the fox first anone,
 ‘Lord King, nou thi wille;
 Thos men me wreiiith of the tune,
 And wold me gladlich for to spille.—
 Gees no hen nad ic noght,
 Sire, for soth ic the sigge,
 Bot as ic ham dere boght,
 And bere ham up myn owen rigge.’
 ‘Godis grame most hi have,
 That in the curte the so pilt!
 Whan hit is so, ich vouchsave,
 Ic forgive the this gilte.’
 The fals wolf stode behind;
 He was doggid and ek felle:—
 ‘Ic am i-com of grete kind,
 Pes thou graunt me, that might ful welle.’

seli asse, simple ass on him, [to the Lion] geet, kids wend, thought
 told, dealt anone, at once spille, destroy sigge, say rigge, back
 grame, anger

‘What hast i-do, bel amy,
 That thou me so oxist pes?’
 ‘Sire,’ he seid, ‘I nel noght lie,
 If thou me woldist hire a res.
 For ic huntid up the doune,
 To loke, Sire, mi bigete;
 Ther ic slow a motune,
 ye, Sir, and fewe gete.
 Ic am i-wreiid, Sire, to the,
 For that ilk gilt;—
 Sire, ichul sker me,
 I ne gaf ham dint no pilt.’
 ‘For soth I sigge the, bel ami,
 Hi nadde no gode munde,
 Thai that wreiid the to mei,
 Thou ne diddist noght bot thi kund.—
 Sei thou me, asse, wat hast i-do?
 Me thenchith thou cannist no gode.
 Whi nadistou, as other mo?
 Thou come of lither stode.’
 ‘Sertis, Sire, not ic noght;
 Ic ete sage alnil gras,—
 More harm ne did ic noght;
 Therfor i-wreiid ic was.’
 ‘Bel ami, that was mis-do,
 That was agen thi kund,
 For to ete such gras so:—
 Hastilich ye him bind;
 Al his bonis ye to-draw,
 Loke that ye noght lete;
 And that ic give al for lawe,
 That his fleis be al i-frette.’—
 Also hit farith nou in lond,
 Whose wol tak therto hede:
 Of thai that habbit an hond,
 Of thevis hi takith mede.....

oxist, askest hire a res, hear a little bigete, gain sker, clear
 dint, blow munde, mind nadistou, hadst thou not [done] lither stode,
 wicked place alnil, and only agen, against kund, nature lete, fail
 i-frette, torn mede, gifts

Whan erth hath erthe i-gette
 And of erthe so hath i-nough,
 Whan he is therin i-stekke,
 Wo is him that was in wough!
 What is the gode that man ssal hab,
 Ute of this world whan he ssal go?
 A sori wed,—whi ssal ic gab?—
 For he broght him no mo.

Right as he com, he ssal wend,
 In wo, in pine, in poverté;—
 Takith gode hede, men, to yure end,
 For as I sigge, so hit wol be.
 Y not wharof beth men so prute;
 Of erthe and axen, felle and bone?
 Be the soule enis ute,
 A vilir caraing nis ther non....

The Political Songs of England from the Reign of John to that of Edward II, edited by THOMAS WRIGHT (Camden Society, 1839).

i-stekke, stuck [buried] wough, wickedness wed, garment gab, jest
 Y not, I know not prute, proud axen, ashes enis, once vilir
 caraing, viler carcase

A SONG AGAINST THE RETINUES OF THE GREAT PEOPLE

The following song against costly ostentation belongs to the beginning of the fourteenth century. Some of the words seem to exist for the sake of rhythm and alliteration and defy translation. A gloss would be useless.

Of ribaudz y ryme
 Ant rede o mi rolle,
 Of gedelynges, gromes,
 Of Colyn ant of Colle,
 Harlotes, hors-knaves,
 Bi pate ant by polle;
 To devel ich hem to-lvyre
 Ant take to tolle!

The gedelynges were gedered
 Of gonnylede gnoste;
 Palefreious ant pages,
 Ant boyes with boste;
 Alle weren y-haht
 Of an horse thoste:
 The devel huem afretye,
 Rau other a-roste!

The shuppere that huem shupte,
 To shome he huem shadde,
 To fles ant to fleye,
 To tyke ant to tadde;
 So seyth romaunz,
 Whose ryht radde,—
 Fleh com of flore,
 Ant lous com of ladde.

The harlotes bueth horlynges,
 Ant haunteth the plawe:
 The gedelynges bueth glotouns,
 Ant drynketh er hit dawe.
 Sathanas huere syre
 Seyde on is sawe,
 Gobelyn made is gerner
 Of gromene mawe.

The knave crommeth is crop,
 Er the cok crawe;
 He momeleth ant moccheth,
 Ant marreth is mawe;
 When he is al for-laped,
 Ant lad over lawe,
 A doseyn of doggen
 Ne myhte hym drame.

The rybaudz a-ryseth
 Er the day rewe;
 He shrapeth on is shabbes,
 Ant draweth huem to dewe.
 Sene is on is browe
 Ant on is eye-brewe,
 That he louseth a losynger,
 And shoyeth a shrewe.

Nou beth capel-claweres
 With shome to-shrude;
 Hue bosketh huem with botouns,
 Ase hit were a brude;
 With lowe lacede shon
 Of an hayfre hude,
 Hue pyketh of here provendre
 Al huere prude.

Whose rykeneth with knaves
 Huere coustage,
 The luthernes of the ladde,
 The prude of the page,
 Thah he yeve hem cattes-dryt
 To huere companage,
 Yet hym shulde a-rewen
 Of the arrerage.

Whil God wes on erthe
 And wondrede wyde,
 Whet wes the resoun
 Why he nolde ryde?
 For he nolde no grom
 To go by ys syde,
 Ne grucchyng of no gedelyng
 To chaule ne to chyde.

Spedeth ou to spewen,
 Ase me doth to spelle;
 The fend ou afretie
 With fleis ant with felle!
 Herkneth hideward, horsmen,
 A tidyng ich ou telle,
 That ye shulen hongen,
 Ant herbarewen in helle!

The Politiical Songs of England from the Reign of John to that of Edward II, edited by THOMAS WRIGHT (Camden Society, 1839), also K. BÖDDEKER: *Altenglische Dichtungen des MS Harl. 2253* (Berlin, 1878).

THE PROVERBS OF HENDYNG

C. H. E. L. I. 363. These appear to have been collected towards the close of the thirteenth century. The verse-form is specially interesting. A few of the forty stanzas will suffice as an illustration. (MS Harl. 2253.)

Mon that wol of wysdam heren,
 At wyse Hendyng he may leren,
 That wes Marcolves sone;
 Gode thonkes & monie thewes
 Forte teche fele shrewes,
 For that wes ever is wone.

Iesu Crist, al folkes red,
 That for us alle tholed ded
 Upon the rode-tre,
 Leve us alle to ben wys,
 Ant to ende in his servys.
 Amen, par charité!

‘God beginning maketh god endyng;’
 Quoth Hendyng....

Ne buē thi child never so duere,
 Ant hit wolle unthewes lere,
 Bet hit other-whyle;
 Mote hit al habben is wille,
 Woltoū, nultou, hit wol spille,
 Ant bicome a fule.

‘Luef child lore byhoveth;’
 Quoth Hendyng....

Wis mon halt is wordes ynne;
 For he nul no gle bygynne,
 Er he have tempred is pype.
 Sot is sot, & that is sene;
 For he wol speke wordes grene,
 Er then hue buen rype.

‘Sottes bolt is sone shote;’
 Quoth Hendyng.

Tel thou never thy fo-mon
 Shome ne teone that the is on,
 Thi care ne thy wo;
 For he wol fonde, yef he may,
 Bothe by nyhtes & by day,
 Of oþ to make two.

‘Tel thou never thy fo that thy fot aketh;’
 Quoth Hendyng....

Drah thyn hond sone ayeyn,
 Yef men the doth a wycke theyn,
 Ther thyn ahte ys lend;
 So that child with-draweth is hond
 From the fur & the brond,
 That hath byfore bue brend.
 ‘Brend child fur dredeth;’

Quoth Hendyng....

This worldes love ys a wrecche,
 Whose hit here, me ne recche,
 Thah y speke heye;
 For y se that on brother
 Lutel recche of that other,
 Be he out of ys eye.
 ‘Fer from eye, fer from herte;’

Quoth Hendyng....

Hendyng seith soþ of mony thyng:
 Iesu crist, hevenne kyng,
 Us to blisse brynge:
 For his sweet moder love,
 That sit in hevene us above,
 Give us god endynge. Amen.

THE FOX AND THE WOLF

C. H. E. L. I. 365–366. This characteristic verse-story was written at the end of the thirteenth century and is preserved in MS Digby No. 86 (Bodleian), a manuscript that contains as well the broad and racy story of Dame Siriz and her dog, the amorous Wilekin and the complaisant Margery. ‘Reynard the Fox’ has been the subject of song and story here from the earliest times to Mr Masefield. ‘The poem is an admirable example of comic satire, perhaps the best of its kind left to us before the days of Chaucer.’ It was printed in *Reliquiae Antiquae* in the transcription of Sir Frederic Madden. The version given below is slightly abbreviated.

A vox gon out of the wode go,
 A fingret so that him wes wo;
 He nes nevere in' none wise
 A fingret erour half so swithe.
 He ne hoeld nouther wey ne strete,
 For him wes loth men to mete;
 Him were levele meten one hen
 Then half an oundred wimmen.
 He strok swithe overal,
 So that he ofsei ane wal;
 Withinne the walle wes on hous.
 The vox wes thider swithe wous,
 For he thouhte his hounger aquenche,
 Other mid mete, other mid drenche.
 Abouten he biheld wel yerne;
 Tho eroust bigon the vox to erne
 Al fort he come to one walle;
 And som therof wes afalle,
 And wes the wal overal tobroke,
 And on yat ther wes iloke.
 At the furmeste bruche that he fond,
 He lep in, and over he wond.
 Tho he wes inne, smere he lou,
 And therof he hadde gome inou;

A fingret, *Ahungered* erour, *before* swithe, *much* hoeld, *kept to* Him were levele meten, *He would rather meet* strok, *passed* swithe, *soon* that, *until* ofsei, *observed* wous, *ready* aquenche, *to quench* drenche, *drink* yerne, *eagerly* Tho eroust, *Then first* erne, *run* fort, *until* tobroke, *broken* on yat, *a gate* iloke, *locked* furmeste bruche, *first opening* wond, *went* smere, *mockingly* lou, *laughed* gome, *mirth*

For he com in withouten leve
Bothen of haiward and of reve.

On hous ther wes, the dore wes ope,
Hennen weren therinne icrope,
Five, that maketh anne flok,
And mid hem sat on kok.
The kok him wes flowen on hey,
And two hennen him seten ney.

‘Vox,’ quod the kok, ‘wat dest thou thare?
Go hom, Crist the yeve kare!
Houre hennen thou dest ofte shome.’...

He wes stille, ne spak namore,
Ac he werth athurst wel sore;
The thurst him dede more wo
Then hevede rather his hounger do.
Overal he ede and souhte;
On aventure his witt him brouhte
To one putte, wes water inne,
That wes imaked mid grete ginne.
Tuo boketes ther he founde,
That other wende to the grounde,
That wen me shulde that on opwinde,
That other wolde adoun winde.
He ne hounderstod nout of the ginne,
Ac nom that boket, and lep therinne,
For he hopede inou to drinke,
This boket beginneth to sinke.
To late the vox wes bithout,
Tho he wes in the ginne ibrout.
Inou he gon him bithenche,
Ac hit ne halp mid none wrenche;
Adoun he moste, he wes therinne,
Ikaut he wes mid swikele ginne.
Hit mighte han iben wel his wille
To lete that boket hongi stille,
Wat mid serewe and mid drede
Al his thurst him overhede.

haiward, *hedge-ward* Hennen, *Hens* icrope, *crept* shome, *shame*
werth, *was* rather, *earlier* ede, *went* one putte, *a well* ginne, *ingenuity*
nom, *tak* wrenche, *trick* Ikaut, *Caught* swikele, *treacherous*
mid serewe, *with sorrow* overhede, *passed away*

Al thus he com to the grounde,
And water inou ther he founde.
Tho he fond water, yerne he dronk;
Him thoute that water there stonk,

The vox wep, and reuliche bigan.
Ther com a wolf gon after than
Out of the depe wode blive,
For he wes afingret swithe.
Nothing he ne founde in al the nighte,
Wermide his honger aquenche mightte.
He com to the putte, thene vox iherde;
He him kneu wel bi his rerde,
For hit wes his neighebore,
And his gossip, of children bore.
Adoun bi the putte he sat.
Quod the wolf: ‘Wat may ben that
That ich in the putte ihere?
Hertou Cristine, other mi fere?
Say me soth, ne gabbe thou me nout,
Wo haveth the in the putte ibroud?’
The vox hine ikneu wel for his kun,
And tho eroust kom wiit to him;
For he thoute mid soumme ginne
Himself houpbringe, thene wolf therinne.
Quod the vox: ‘Wo is nou there?
Ich wene hit is Sigrim that ich here.’
‘That is soth,’ the wolf sede;
‘Ac wat art thou, so God the rede?’
‘A,’ quod the vox, ‘ich wille the telle;
On alpi word ich lie nelle.
Ich am Reneuard, thi frend,
And yif ich thine come hevede iwend,
Ich hedde so ibede for the,
That thou sholdest comen to me.’

yerne, scarcely reuliche, sadly blive, swiftly Wermide, Wherewith
rerde, speech of children, from childhood ihere, I hear Hertou, Art thou
fere, friend gabbe, lie Wo, Who kun, relative tho eroust, then first
houpbringe, to bring up On alpi, A single nelle, will not come, coming
iwend, had known ibede, prayed

'Mid the?' quod the wolf. 'war to?
 Wat shulde ich ine the putte do?'
 Quod the vox: 'Thou art ounwiis,
 Her is the blisse of paradiis;
 Her ich mai evere wel fare,
 Withouten pine, withouten kare;
 Her is mete, her is drinke,
 Her is blisse withouten swinke;
 Her nis hounger never mo,
 Ne non other kunnes wo;
 Of alle gode her is inou....
 Wat shuld ich ine the worlde go,
 Ther nis bote kare and wo,
 And livie in fulthe and in sunne?
 Ac her beth joies fele cunne;
 Her beth bothe shep and get.'
 The wolf haveth hounger swithe gret,
 For he nedde yare i-ete;
 And tho he herde speken of mete,
 He wolde bletheliche ben thare.
 'A,' quod the wolf, 'gode ifere,
 Moni goed mel thou hast me binome
 Let me adoun to the kome,
 And al ich wole the foryeve.'
 'Ye,' quod the vox, 'were thou isrive,
 And sunnen hevedest al forsake,
 And to klene lif itake,
 Ich wolde so bidde for the
 That thou sholdest comen to me.'...

[The fox then hears the wolf's confession.]

'Wolf,' quod the vox him tho,
 'Al that thou hast her bifore ido,
 In thouht, in speche, and in dede,
 In euche otheres kunnes quede,
 Ich the foryeve at thisse nede.'

ounwiis, *unwise* pine, *trouble* swinke, *labour* kunnes, *kind of*
 Wat, *Why* fulthe, *foulness* fele cunne, *many kinds* get, *goats* yare, *for a*
long time bletheliche, *blithely* ifere, *friend* binome, *taken away*
 isrive, *shriiven* hevedest, *haddest*

‘Crist the foryelde!’ the wolf seide.
 ‘Nou ich am in clene live,
 Ne recche ich of childe ne of wive.
 Ac sei me wat I shal do,
 And ou ich may comen the to.’
 ‘Do?’ quod the vox. ‘ich wille the lere.
 Isiist thou a boket hongi there?
 There is a bruche of hevene blisse.
 Lep therinne, mid iwisse,
 And thou shalt comen to me sone.’
 Quod the wolf, ‘That is light to done.
 He lep in, and way sumdel;
 That weste the vox ful wel.
 The wolf gon sinke, the vox arise;
 Tho gon the wolf sore agrise.
 Tho he com amidde the putte,
 The wolfe thene vox onward mette.
 ‘Gossip,’ quod the wolf, ‘wat nou?’
 Wat havest thou imunt? weder wolt thou?’
 ‘Weder ich wille?’ the vox sede.
 ‘Ich wille oup, so God me rede!
 And nou go doun with thi meel,
 Thi bigete worth wel smal;
 Ac ich am therof glad and blithe,
 That thou art nomen in clene live.
 Thi soule-cnul ich wille do ringe,
 And masse for thine soule singe.’
 The wrecche binethe nothing ne vind
 Bote cold water, and hounger him bind;
 To colde gistninge he wes ibede;
 Vroggen haveth his dou iknede.
 The wolf in the putte stod,
 Afingret so that he wes wod.
 Inou he cursede that thider him broute;
 The vox therof luitel route.

ou, how bruche of, opening into way, weighed sumdel, somewhat
 weste, knew agrise, alarmed imunt, meant bigete, getting nomen, taken
 soule-cnul, soul-knell gistninge, feast ibede, bidden Vroggen, Frogs
 dou iknede, dough kneaded wod, mad route, recked

The put him wes the house ney,
 Ther freren woneden swithe sley....
 O frere there wes among....
 He com to the putte, and drou,
 And the wolf wes hevi inou.
 The frere mid al his maine tey
 So longe that he thene wolf isey.
 For he sei thene wolf ther sitte,
 He gradde: ‘The devel is in the putte!’

To the putte hy gounnen gon,
 Alle mid pikes, and staves, and ston,
 Euch mon mid that he hedde,
 Wo wes him that wepne nedde.
 Hy comen to the putte, thene wolf opdrowe;
 Tho hede the wreche fomen inowe,
 That weren egre him to slete
 Mid grete houndes, and to bete.
 Wel and wrothe he wes iswonge;
 Mid staves and speres he wes istounge.
 The vox bicharde him, mid iwissee,
 For he ne fond nones kunnes blisse,
 Ne hof duntes foryevenesse.

MÄTZNER: *Altenglische Sprachproben*, I.

ney, near freren, friars woneden, dwelt sley, shrewd maine, strength
 tey, pulled that, until gradde, cried gounnen gon, began to go nedde,
 had not fomen, foes slete, tear iswonge, beaten bicharde, deceived
 hof duntes, of blows

CLERICUS ET PUELLA: A DIALOGUE

England loves its jest, even in troubled times. This is true of the fourteenth century, to which the present story in verse belongs. The ‘plot’ was familiar in the earlier *Interludium de Clerico et Puella*—the first English interlude of which anything survives. See, too, *Dame Siriz*.

‘My deth y love, my lyf ich hate,
 For a levedy shene;
 Heo is briht so daies liht,
 That is on me wel sene.

Al y falewe so doth the lef,
 In somer when hit is grene;
 Yef mi thoht helpeth me noht,
 To wham shal y me mene?
 Sorewe and syke and drery mod
 Byndeth me so faste,
 That y wene to walke wod,
 Yef hit me lengore laste;
 My serewe, my care, al with a word
 He myhte awey caste;
 Whet helpeth the, my suete lemmon,
 My lyf thus forte gaste?
 'Do wey, thou cleric, thou art a fol,
 With the bydde y noht chyde,
 Shalt thou never lyve that day
 Mi love that thou shalt byde;
 Yef thou in my boure art take,
 Shame the may bityde;
 The is bettere on fote gon,
 Then wycked hors to ryde.'
 'Weylawei! whi seist thou so?
 Thou rewe on me, thy man;
 Thou art ever in my thoht
 In londe wher ich am.
 Yef y deye for thi love,
 Hit is the mykel sham;
 Thou lete me lyve, and be thi luef,
 And thou my suete lemman.'
 'Be stille, thou fol, y calle the riht,
 Const thou never blynne?
 Thou art wayted day and nyght
 With fader and al my kynne;
 Be thou in mi bour ytake,
 Lete they for no synne
 Me to holde, and the to slou;
 The deth so thou maht wynne!'

falewe, *fade*
byddē, *must*
hesitate

mene, *complain* wod, *mad* He, *She* gaste, *destroy*
blynne, *cease* wayted, *watched* Lete they, *They will not*

‘Suete lady, thou wend thi mod;
 Sorewe thou wolt me kythe;
 Ich am al so sory mon,
 So ich was whylen blythe—
 In a wyndou ther we stod,
 We custe us fyfty sythe.—
 Feir biheste maketh mony mon
 Al is serewes mythe.’

‘Weylawey! whi seist thou so?
 Mi serewe thou makest newe;
 Y lovede a clerk al par amours,
 Of love he wes ful trewe;
 He nes nout blythe never a day,
 Bote he me sone sehe,
 Ich lovede him betere then my lyf,
 Whet bote is hit to lehe?’

‘Whil y wes a cleric in scole,
 Wel muchel y couthe of lore;
 Ych have tholed for thy love
 Woundes fele sore,
 Fer from hom, and eke from men,
 Under the wode gore;
 Suete ledy, thou rewe of me,
 Nou may y no more.’

‘Thou semest wel to ben a cleric,
 For thou spekest so stille;
 Shalt thou never for mi love
 Woundes thole grylle;
 Fader, moder, and al my kun
 Ne shal me holde so stille,
 That y nam thyn, and thou art myn,
 To don al thi wille.’

BÖDDEKER: *Altenglische Dichtungen.*

<i>wend, change</i>	<i>kythe, show</i>	<i>whylen, formerly</i>	<i>custe, kissed</i>
<i>sythe, times</i>	<i>biheste, promise</i>	<i>is, his</i>	<i>mythe, lose</i>
<i>sehe, saw</i>	<i>bote, use</i>	<i>couthe, knew</i>	<i>Bote, Unless</i>
<i>tholed, endured</i>	<i>fele, very</i>	<i>gore, gown (cover)</i>	<i>lore, learning</i>
	<i>lehe, lie</i>		<i>grylle, cruel</i>

DAME SIRIZ

C. H. E. L. I. 365-366. ‘Dame Siriȝ...was put into English, after many wanderings through other languages, about the middle of the thirteenth century.’ It is preserved in MS Digby, No. 86. The name, usually spelt as ‘Siriȝ,’ has been altered by Cook to ‘Siriȝ.’ Both forms occur, but the former is now more familiar.

As I com by an waie,
 Hof on ich herde saie,
 Ful modi mon and proud;
 Wis he wes of lore,
 And gouthlich under gore,
 And clothed in fair sroud.
 To lovien he begon
 On wedded wimmon,
 Theroft he hevede wrong;
 His herte hire wes alon,
 That reste nevede he non,
 The love wes so strong.
 Wel yerne he him bi-thoutte
 Hou he hire gete moute
 In ani cunnes wise.
 That befel on an day,
 The loverd wend away
 Hon his marchaundise.
 He wente him to then inne
 Ther hoe wonede inne,
 That wes riche won;
 And com into then halle,
 Ther hoe wes srud with palle,
 And thus he bigon:—
 ‘God almighty be her-inne!’
 ‘Welcome, so ich ever bide wenne,’
 Quod this wif;

Hof, Of modi, haughty gouthlich, goodly gore, garment On, A nevede, had not yerne, seriously moute, might Ther, Where hoe, she won, dwelling srud, clothed palle, cloth bide wenne, expect happiness

'His hit thi wille, comme and site,
 And wat is thi wille let me wite,
 Mi leve lif.
 Bi houre loverd, hevene king,
 If I mai don ani thing
 That the is lef,
 Thou mightt finden me ful fre,
 Fol bletheli willi don for the,
 Withhouten gref.'
 'Dame, God the for-yelde,
 Bote on that thou me nout bi-melde,
 Ne make the wroth,
 Min hernde willi to the bede;
 Bote wraththen the for ani dede
 Were me loth.'
 'Nai i-wis, Wilekin,
 For nothing that ever is min,
 Thau thou hit yirne;
 Houncurteis ne willi be,
 Ne con I nout on vilté,
 Ne nout I nelle lerne.
 Thou mait saien all thine wille,
 And I shal herknen and sitten stille,
 That thou have told.
 And if that thou me tellest skil,
 I shal don after thi wil,
 That be thou bolde;
 And thau thou saie me ani same,
 Ne shal I the nouight blame
 For thi sawe.'
 'Nou ich have wonne leve,
 Yif that I me shulde greve,
 Hit were hounlaw.
 Certes, dame, thou seist as hende;
 And I shall setten spel on ende,
 And tellen the al,

His hit, *If it is* _{lef, pleasant} *for-yelde, repay* *Bote on that, On condition*
 bi-melde, *betray* _{hernde, errand} *bede, tell* *wraththen, to anger*
 yirne, *long for* *Houncurteis, Uncourteous* *on, of* *skil, reason*
 same, *shame* *sawe, saying* *hounlaw, wrong* *spel, talk*

What ich wolde, and wi ich com,
 Ne con ich saien non falsdom,
 Ne non I ne shal.
 Ich habbe i-loved the moni yer,
 Thau ich nabbe nout ben her
 Mi love to schowe.
 Wile thi loverd is in toune,
 Ne mai no man with the holden roune
 With no thewe.
 Yursten-dai ich herde saie,
 As ich wende bi the waie,
 Of oure sire;
 Me tolde me that he was gon
 To the feire of Botolfston
 In Lincolneschire.
 And for ich weste that he wes houte,
 Tharfore ich am i-gon aboute
 To speken with the.
 Him burth to liken wel his lif,
 That mightte welde sett a vif
 In privité.
 Dame, if hit is thi wille,
 Both dernelike and stille
 Ich wille the love.'
 'That woldi don for non thing,
 Bi houre Loverd, hevene king,
 That ous is bove!
 Ich habe mi loverd that is mi spouse,
 That maiden broute me to house
 Mid menske i-nou;
 He loveth me and ich him wel,
 Oure love is also trewe as stel,
 Withhouten wou.
 Than he be from hom on his hernde,
 Ich weré ounseli, if ich lernede
 To ben on hore.

roune, *secret talk*
 weste, *knew*
 menske, *honour*

Yursten-dai, *Yesterday*
 burth, *behoves*
 ounseli, *unholy*

Botolfston, *Boston*
 dernelike, *secretly*

That ne shal nevere be,
 That I shal don selk falseté,
 On bedde ne on flore.
 Never more his lif wile,
 Thau he were an hondred mile
 Bi-yende Rome,
 For no thing ne shuld I take
 Mon on erthe to ben mi make,
 Ar his hom come.'
 'Dame, dame, torn thi mod:
 Thi curteisi wes ever god,
 And yet shal be;
 For the Loverd that ous haveth wrout,
 Amend thi mod, and torn thi thout,
 And rew on me.'
 'We, we! oldest thou me a fol?
 So ich ever mote biden yol,
 Thou art ounwis.
 Mi thout ne shalt thou newer wende;
 Mi loverd is curteis mon and hende,
 And mon of pris;
 And ich am wif bothe god and trewe;
 Trewer woman ne mai no mon cnowe
 Then ich am.
 Thilke time ne shal never bi-tide,
 That mon for wouing ne thoru prude
 Shal do me scham.'
 'Swete lemmون, merci!
 Same ne vilani
 Ne bede I the non;
 Bote derne love I the bede,
 As mon that wolde of love spede,
 And finde won.
 So bide ich evere mete other drinke,
 Her thou lesest al thi swinke;
 Thou might gon hom, leve brother,
 For [ne] wille ich the love, ne non other,

make, mate
yol, Yule

Ar, Ere mod, mind rew, take pity We, Alas
prude, pride won, joy swinke, labour

Bote mi wedde houssebonde.
 To tellen hit the ne wille ich wonde.'
 'Certes, dame, that me for-thinketh;
 And wo is the mon tha muchel swinketh,
 And at the laste leseth his sped!
 To maken menis his him ned.
 Bi me i saie ful i-wis,
 That love the love that I shal mis.
 An, dame, have nou godne dai!
 And thilke Loverd, that al welde mai,
 Leve that thi thout so tourne,
 That ich for the no leng ne mourne.'
 Dreri mod he wente awai,
 And thoute bothe night and dai
 Hire al for to wende.
 A frend him radde for to fare,
 And leven al his michele kare,
 To dame Siriz the hende.
 Thider he wente him anon,
 So suithe so he mightte gon,
 No mon he ni mette.
 Ful he wes of tene and treie;
 Mid wordes milde and eke sleie
 Faire he hire grette.
 'God the i-blessi, dame Siriz!
 Ich am i-com to speken the wiz,
 For ful muchele nede.
 And ich mai have help of the,
 Thou shalt have that thou shalt se
 Ful riche mede.'
 'Welcomen art thou, leve sone;
 And if ich mai other cone
 In eni wise for the do,
 I shal strengthen me ther-to;
 For-thi, leve sone, tel thou me
 What thou woldest I dude for the.'

wonde, fear menis, moans his, is welde, govern Leve, Grant
 Dreri mod, Sadly radde, advised suithe, quickly treie, grief
 sleie, cunning And, If cone, know how For-thi, Therefore

‘Bote leve Nelde, ful evel I fare;
 I lede mi lif with tene and kare;
 With muchel hounsele ich lede mi lif,
 And that is for on suete wif
 That heightte Margeri.
 Ich have i-loved hire moni dai;
 And of hire love hoe seith me nai:
 Hider ich com for-thi.
 Bote if hoe wende hire mod,
 For serewe mon ich wakese wod,
 Other miselve quelle.
 Ich hevede i-thout miself to slo;
 For then radde a frend me go
 To the mi serewe telle.
 He saide me, withhouten faille,
 That thou me coughest helpe and vaile,
 And bringen me of wo,
 Thoru thine crafftes and thine dedes;
 And ich wile geve the riche mede,
 With that hit be so.’
 ‘Benedicite be herinne!
 Her havest thou, sone, mikel senne.
 Loverd, for his suete nome,
 Lete the therfore haven no shome!
 Thou servest affter Godes grome,
 Wen thou seist on me silk blame.
 For ich am old, and sek, and lame;
 Seknesse haveth maked me ful tame.
 Blesse the, bless the, leve knave!
 Leste thou mesaventer have,
 For this lesing that is founden
 Oppon me, that am harde i-bounden.
 Ich am on holi wimon,
 On witchecrafft nout I ne con,
 Bote with gode mens almesdede
 Ilke dai mi lif I fede,

Nelde, <i>Gossip</i>	hounsele, <i>unhappiness</i>	Bote if, <i>Unless</i>	serewe mon,
sorrow must	wakese wod, <i>wax mad</i>	miselve quelle, <i>myself destroy</i>	grome, <i>anger</i>
For then, <i>But then</i>	vaile, <i>assist</i>	silk, <i>such</i>	
lesing, <i>falsehood</i>	founden, <i>invented</i>		

And bidde mi pater-noster and mi crede,
 That Goed hem helpe at hore nede,
 That helpen me mi lif to lede,
 And leve that hem mote wel spede.
 His lif and his soule worthe i-shend,
 That the to me this hernde haveth send;
 And leve me to ben i-wreken
 On him this shome me haveth speken.'
 'Leve Nelde, bi-lef al this;
 Me thinketh that thou art onwis.
 The mon that me to the taute,
 He weste that thou hous coughest saute.
 Help, dame Sirith, if thou maut,
 To make me with the sueting saut,
 And ich wille geve the gift ful stark,
 Moni a pound and moni a marke,
 Warme pilche and warme shon,
 With that min hernde be wel don.
 Of muchel godlec might thou yelpe,
 If hit be so that thou me helpe.'
 'Lih me nout, Wilekin, bi thi leuté,
 Is hit thi hernest thou tehest me?
 Lovest thou wel dame Margeri?'
 'Ye, Nelde, witerli;
 Ich hire love, hit mot me spille,
 Bote ich gete hire to mi wille.'
 'That, god Wilekin, me reweth thi scathe,
 Houre Loverd sende the help rathe!
 Weste hic hit mightte ben for-holen,
 Me wolde thincke wel solen
 Thi wille for to fullen.
 Make me siker with word on honde,
 That thou wolt helen, and I wile fonde
 If ich mai hire tellen.

i-shend, *shamed* i-wreken, *avenged* bi-lef, *leave* taute, *directed*
 hous coughest saute, *coolest reconcile* pilche, *fur* godlec, *benefit* yelpe,
 boast leuté, *faith* tehest, *teachest* witerli, *truly* spille, *destroy*
 scathe, *hurt* rathe, *soon* Weste hic, *If I knew* for-holen, *concealed*
 wel solen, *very proper* siker, *certain* helen, *hide* fonde, *try*

For al the world ne woldi nout
 That ich were to chapitre i-brout,
 For none selke werkes.
 Mi judgement were sone i-given,
 To ben with shome somer driven,
 With prestes and with clarkes.'
 'I-wis, Nelde, ne woldi
 That thou hevedest vilani
 Ne shame for mi goed.
 Her I the mi trouthe plightte,
 Ich shal helen bi mi mightte,
 Bi the holi roed!'
 'Welcome, Wilekin, hiderward;
 Her hast i-maked a foreward
 That the mai ful wel like.
 Thou maight blesse thilke sith,
 For thou maight make the ful blith;
 Dar thou namore sike.
 To goder hele ever come thou hider,
 For sone willi gange thider,
 And maken hire hounderstonde.
 I shal kenne hire sulke a lore;
 That hoe shal lovien the mikel more
 Then ani mon in londe.'
 'Al so havi Godes grith,
 Wel hast thou said, dame Sirith,
 And goder hele shal ben thin.
 Have her twenti shiling,
 This ich geve the to meding,
 To buggen the sep and swin.'
 'So ich evere brouke hous other flet,
 Neren never penes beter biset,
 Then thes shulen ben.
 For I shal don a juperti,
 And a ferli maistri,
 That thou shalt ful wel sen.—

chapitre, *chapter* [*church court*] somer driven, *bundled out* foreward,
compact sith, *chance* Dar, *Needst* sike, *sigh* goder hele, *good fortune*
 kenne, *teach* grith, *peace* buggen, *buy* sep, *sheep* hous other flet,
house or floor juperti, *risky deed* ferli, *wonderful*

Pepir nou shalt thou eten,
 This mustart shal ben thi mete,
 And gar thin eien to rene;
 I shal make a lesing
 Of thin heie renning,
 Ich wot wel wer and wenne.'
 'Wat! nou const thou no god?
 Me thinketh that thou art wod:
 Gevest tho the welpe mustard?'
 'Be stille, boinard!
 I shal mit this ilke gin
 Gar hire love to ben al thin.
 Ne shal ich never have reste ne ro,
 Til ich have told hou thou shalt do.
 Abid me her til min hom-come.'
 'Yus, bi the somer blome,
 Hethen nulli ben bi-nomen,
 Til thou be agein comen.'
 Dame Sirith bigon to go,
 As a wrecche that is wo,
 That hoe come hire to then inne,
 Ther this gode wif wes inne.
 Tho hoe to the dore com,
 Swithe reuliche hoe bigon:
 'Loverd,' hoe seith, 'wo is holde wives,
 That in poverte ledeth ay lives;
 Not no mon so muchel of pine
 As povre wif that falleth in ansine.
 That mai ilke mon bi me wite,
 For mai I nouther gange ne site.
 Ded woldi ben ful fain,
 Hounger and thurst me haveth nei slain;
 Ich ne mai mine limes on wold,
 For mikel hounger and thurst and cold.
 War-to liveth selke a wrecche?
 Wi nul Goed mi soule fecche?'

thou, <i>i.e.</i> her dog	gar, make	rene (renne), run	boinard, fool
gin, device	ro, peace	Hethen, Hence	nulli, <i>I will not</i>
bi-nomen, taken	inne, lodging	holde, old	Not, Knows not
ansine, want	bi me wite, know by me	on wold, govern	

‘Seli wif, God the hounbinde!
 To dai wille I the mete finde!
 For love of Goed.
 Ich have reuthe of thi wo,
 For evele i-clothed I se the go,
 And evele i-shoed.
 Com herin, ich wile the fede.’
 ‘Goed almighty do the mede,
 And the loverd that wes on rode i-don,
 And faste fourti daus to non,
 And hevene and erthe haveth to welde.’
 ‘As thilke Loverd the for-yelde,
 Have her fles and eke bred,
 And make the glad, hit is mi red;
 And have her the coppe with the drinke;
 Goed mede the for thi swinke.’
 Thenne spac that olde wif,
 Crist awarie hire lif!
 ‘Alas! alas! that ever I live!
 Al the sinne ich wolde for-give
 The mon that smite off min heved:
 Ich wolde mi lif me were bi-reved!’
 ‘Seli wif, what eilleth the?’
 ‘Bote ethe mai I sori be:
 Ich hevede a douter feir and fre,
 Feirer ne mightte no mon se;
 Hoe hevede a curteis hossebonde,
 Freour mon mightte no mon fonde.
 Mi douter lovede him al to wel;
 For-thi mak I sori del.
 Oppon a dai he was oute wend,
 And thar-forn wes mi douter shend.
 He hede on ernde out of toune:
 And com a modi clarc with croune,
 To mi douter his love beed,
 And hoe nolde nout folewe his red.

i-don, *slain* awarie, *curse* ethe, *easily* sori del, *bitter moan*
 thar-forn, *through this* shend, *ruined* modi clarc, *haughty cleric*
 croune, *tonsure*

He ne mightte his wille have,
 For nothing he mightte crave.
 Thenne bi-gon the clerc to wiche,
 And shop mi douter til a biche.
 This is mi douter that ich of speke:
 For del of hire min herte breke.
 Loke hou hire heien greten,
 On hire cheken the teres meten.
 For-thi, dame, were hit no wonder,
 Thah min herte burste assunder.
 And wose never is yong houssewif,
 Ha loveth ful luitel hire lif,
 An eni clerc of love hire bede,
 Bote hoe graunte and lete him spedē.
 ‘A! Loverd Crist, wat mai thenne do!
 This enderdai com a clarc me to,
 And bed me love on his manere,
 And ich him nolde nout i-here.
 Ich trouue he wolle me for-sape.
 Hou troustu, Nelde, ich moue ascape?’
 ‘God almighty be thin help,
 That thou ne be nouther bicche ne welp!
 Leve dame, if eni clerc
 Bedeth the that love werc,
 Ich rede that thou graunte his bone,
 And bi-com his lefmon sone.
 And if that thou so ne dost,
 A worse red thou ounderfost.’
 ‘Loverd Crist, that me is wo,
 That the clarc me hede fro,
 Ar he me hevede bi-wonne!
 Me were leve then ani fe
 That he hevede enes leien bi me,
 And efftsones bi-gunne.
 Evermore, Nelde, ich wille be thin,
 With that thou feche me Willekin,

to wiche, ‘to *witch*’ shop, *changed* til, *into* wose, *whoso*
 Ha, She An, If Bote hoe, Unless she enderdai, other day for-sape,
 transform troustu, *thinkest thou* ounderfost, *receivest* fe, money
 enes, once efftsones, at once

The clarc of wam I telle.
 Giftes willi give the,
 That thou maight ever the betere be,
 Bi Godes houne belle!'
 'Sothliche, mi swete dame,
 And if I mai withhoute blame,
 Fain ich wille fonde;
 And if ich mai with him mete,
 Bi eni wei other bi strete,
 Nout me willi wonde.
 Have god dai, dame! forth willi go.'
 'Allegate loke that thou do so
 As ich the bad;
 Bote that thou me Wilekin bringe,
 Ne mai never lawe ne singe,
 Ne be glad.'
 'I-wis, dame, if I mai,
 Ich wille bringen him yet to dai,
 Bi mine mightte.'
 Hoe wente hire to hire inne,
 Her hoe founde Wilekinne,
 Bi hourre Drightte!
 'Swete Wilekin, be thou nout dred,
 For of thin hernde ich have wel sped,
 Swithe com forth thider with me;
 For hoe haveth send affter the.
 I-wis nou maight thou ben above,
 For thou hast grauntise of hire love.'
 'God the for-yelde, leve Nelde,
 That hevene and erthe haveth to welde!'
 This modi mon bigon to gon
 With Siriz to his levemon
 In thilke stounde.
 Dame Siriz bigon to telle,
 And swor bi Godes ouene belle,
 Hoe hevede him founde.

Godes houne belle, *the sacring bell*
 (in every way) lawe, laugh
 thilke stounde, *that hour*

wonde, *hesitate*
 Drightte, *Lord*

Allegate, *Always*
 Swithe, *Quickly*

'Dame, so have ich Wilekin sout,
For nou have ich him i-brout.'
'Welcome, Wilekin, swete thing,
Thou art welcomore then the king.
Wilekin the swete,
Mi love I the bi-hete,
 To don al thine wille.
Turnd ich have mi thout,
For I ne wolde nout
 That thou the shuldest spille.'
'Dame, so ich evere bide noen,
And ich am redi and i-boen
 To don al that thou saie.
Nelde, *par ma fai!*
Thou most gange awai,
 Wile ich and hoe shulen plaie.'
'Goddot so I wille:
And loke that thou hire tille,
 And strek out hire thes.
God yeve the muchel kare,
Yeif that thou hire spare,
 The wile thou hire bes.
And wose is onwis,
And for non pris
 Ne con geten his levemon,
I shal, for mi mede,
Garen him to spedē,
 For ful wel I con.'

MÄTZNER: *Altenglische Sprachproben.*

i-boen, *prepared*

Goddot, *God knows*

strek, *stretch*

thes, *thighs*

THE LAND OF COKAYgne

C. H. E. L. I. 364-365. This pleasant satire describes a very earthly Paradise of kitchen delights. Its lightness of touch is almost French, and there happens to be a parallel in *Li Fabliaus de Coquaigne*, in which one of the most succulent details is rather similar:

Par les rues vont rostissant
Les crasses oes, et tornant
Tout par eles.

See Cook, *A Literary Middle English Reader*. The poem belongs to the first years of the fourteenth century. It contains 190 lines. (MS Harl. 913.)

Fur in see bi west Spaygne
 Is a lond ihote Cokaygne.
 Ther nis lond under heven-riche,
 Of wel, of godnis, hit iliche;
 Thogh Paradis be miri and bright,
 Cokaygn is of fairir sight.
 What is ther in Paradis
 Bot grasse and flure and grene ris?
 Thogh ther be joi and grete dute,
 Ther nis mete bote frute;
 Ther nis halle, bure, no benche,
 Bot watir, manis thurst to quenche.
 Beth ther no man but two,
 Hely and Enok also;
 Elinglich may hi go
 Whar ther wonith men no mo.

In Cokaygne is met and drink
 Withute care, how, and swink....
 Under heven nis lond, iwissee,
 Of so mochil joi and blisse.

Ther is mani swete sighte:
 Al is dai, nis ther no nighte,
 Ther nis baret nother strif,
 Nis ther no deth, ac ever lif;
 Ther nis lac of met no cloth,
 Ther nis man no womman wroth....
 Nis ther flei, fle, no lowse,
 In cloth, in toune, bed, no house;
 Ther nis dunnir, slete, no hawle,
 No non vile worme, no snawle,
 No non storme, rein, no winde;
 Ther is man no womman blinde,
 Ok al is game, joi, and gle.
 Wel is him that ther mai be.

heven-riche, *the kingdom of heaven*
 nis mete, *no food* bure, *room*
 swink, *labour* baret, *quarrel*

ris, *branches*
 Elinglich, *Sadly*
 dunnir, *thunder*

dute, *delight*
 how, *trouble*
 Ok, *But*

Ther beth rivers gret and fine,
 Of oilē, melk, honi, and wine;
 Watir servith ther to no thing
 Bot to sight and to waiissing.
 Ther is mani maner frute;
 Al is solas and dedute.

Ther is a wel fair abbei
 Of white monkes and of grei.
 Ther beth bowris and halles,
 Al of pasteiis beth the walles,
 Of fleis, of fisſe, and rich met,
 The likfullist that man mai et.
 Fluren cakes beth the scingles alle
 Of cherche, cloister, boure, and halle.
 The pinnes beth fat podinges,
 Rich met to princez and [to] kinges;
 Man mai therof et inogh
 Al with right, and noght with wogh:
 Al is commune to yung and old,
 To stoute and sterne, mek and bold.

Ther is a cloister, fair and light,
 Brod and lang, of sembli sight.
 The pilers of that cloistre alle
 Beth i-turned of cristale,
 With har bas and capitale
 Of grene jaspe and rede corale.
 In the praer is a tre
 Swithe likful for to se.
 The rote is gingevir and galingale;
 The siouns beth al sedwale,
 Trie maces beth the flure,
 The rind, canel of swet odur,
 The frute, gilofre of gode smakke.
 Of cucubes ther nis no lakke.
 Ther beth rosis of rede ble,
 And lilie likful for to se;

dedute, delight
 wogh, wrong
 setwall, zedoary
 gilofre, gillyflower

Fluren, *Flour* scingles, *shingles* pinnes, *pinnacles*
 bas, *base* praer, *meadow* siouns, *shoots* sedwale,
 Trie maces, *Choice nutmegs* canel, *cinnamon*
 cucubes, *spices*

Thai faloweth never day no night;
 This aght be a swete sight.
 Ther beth iiij willis in the abbei
 Of triacle and halwei,
 Of baum and ek piement,
 Ever ernend to right rent
 Of tham stremis al the molde.
 Stonis preciuse and golde:
 Ther is saphir and uniune,
 Carbuncle and astiune,
 Smaragde, lugre, and prassiune,
 Beril, onix, topasiune,
 Ametist and crisolite,
 Calcedun and epetite.

Ther beth briddes mani and fale:
 Throstil, thruisse, and nightingale,
 Chalandre and wodwale,
 And other briddes without tale,
 That stinteth never by har might
 Miri to sing dai and night.
 Yite I do yow mo to witte:
 The gees irostid on the spitte
 Fleez to that abbai, God hit wot,
 And gredith: ‘Gees al hote, al hot!’
 Hi bringeth garlek gret plente,
 The best idight that man mai se.
 The leverokes that beth cuth
 Lighthith adun to manis muth,
 Idight in stu ful swithe wel,
 Pudrid with gilofre and canel.
 Nis no spech of no drink,
 Ak take inogh withute swink....

MÄTZNER: *Altenglische Sprachproben.*

faloweth, *fade* aght be, *ought to be* willis, *wells* triacle, *medicine*
 halwei, *healing water* ernend, *running* rent, *profit* uniune, *pearl*
 astiune, *astrion (sapphire)* Smaragde, *Emerald* lugre, *ligure*
 prassiune, *chrysoprase* epetite, *hepatite* fale, *numerous* Chalandre, *Lark*
 tale, *number* stinteth, *cease* yow mo to witte, *make you know further*
 gredith, *cry out* cuth, *known* Idight in stu, *Dressed in stew*
 Pudrid, *Sprinkled*

THE HARMONIOUS BLACKSMITHS

From MS Arundel, 292, late fourteenth (or early fifteenth) century. The point of the piece is in its sound rather than in its meaning.

Swarte smekyd smethes sniateryd wyth smoke
 Dryve me to deth wyth den of here dyntes;
 Swech noys on nyghtes ne herd men never,
 What knavene cry and clateryng of knockes,
 The cammede kongons cryen after 'Col! col!'
 And blowen here bellewys that al here brayn brestes.
 Huf, puf, seith that on, Haf, paf, that other.
 Thei spyttyn and spraulyn and spellyn many spelles,
 Thei gnauen and gnacchen, thei gronys to-gydere,
 And holdyn hem hote with here hard hamers.
 Of a bole hyde ben here barm-fellys,
 Here schankes ben schakeled for the fere flunderys,
 Hevy hamerys thei han that hard be handled,
 Stark strokes thei stryken on a stelyd stokke,
 Lus! bus! las! das! rowtyn be rowe.
 Swech dolful a dreme the devyl it to-dryve!
 The mayster longith a lityl, and lascheth a lesse,
 Twyneth hem tweyn and towchith a treble;
 Tik! tak! hic! hac! tiket! taket! tyk! tak!
 Lus! bus! las! das! swych lyf thei ledyn,
 Alle clothe-merys, Cryst hem gyve sorwe!
 May no man for brenwaterys on nyght han hys rest.

THOMAS WRIGHT: *Reliquiae Antiquae*, revised.

knavene cry, <i>knaves' noise</i>	cammede kongons, <i>flat-nosed imps</i>	bole
hyde, <i>bull's hide</i>	barm-fellys, <i>leather aprons</i>	schakeled, <i>armoured</i>
(protected)	flunderys, <i>flinders (fragments)</i>	stelyd stokke, <i>steel block</i>
rowtyn be rowe, <i>beat by row (turns)</i>	dreme, <i>noise</i>	lengthith, <i>lengthens</i>
lascheth, <i>beats out (?)</i>	Twyneth, <i>Joins</i>	towchith a treble, <i>hammers lightly</i>
clothe-merys, <i>mare-clothers (horse-armourers)</i>	brenwaterys, <i>burn-waters</i>	<i>(steam-makers)</i>

APPENDIX

CHANGES IN THE LANGUAGE TO THE DAYS OF CHAUCER

(Adapted from *C. H. E. L.* i, Chapter xix, pp. 379–406, by the late Henry Bradley. For the influence of the Anglo-French Law Language, see *C. H. E. L.* i, Chapter xx, pp. 407–412, by the late F. W. Maitland.)

‘The three Germanic peoples—the Jutes from Jutland, the Angles from Schleswig and the Saxons from Holstein—who, in the fifth and sixth centuries, made themselves masters of the greater part of south Britain, spoke dialects so nearly allied that they can have had no great difficulty in understanding each other’s speech. It does not appear, however, that, in their original seats, they had any general name for their common race or their common language.’ They were probably unconscious of any such community. The Britons called all Germanic invaders Saxons, and the Celtic-speaking inhabitants of these islands still call the English people and its language ‘Saxon.’ On the Continent the Germanic conquerors were indiscriminately called Angles or Saxons. Gregory I had to call them Angles for the sake of his famous pun; but Vitalian (c. 660) calls the Angle Oswiu of Northumbria *rex Saxonum*. The Church tended to make Angles, Jutes and Saxons all regard themselves as *Angolcynn* or *gens Anglorum*. Though Bede sometimes speaks of *Angli sive Saxones*, his name for the whole people is *Angli* or *gens Anglorum*, and for the language *sermo Anglicus*. When he speaks of *lingua Saxonica* he means specifically the language of the E. or W. Saxons. A century and a half later, Alfred (a W. Saxon) never uses any other name for his own language but *Englisc*. ‘It is in the great king’s writings that we find the earliest vernacular examples of the name which our language has ever since continued to bear.’

The name became more appropriate as time went on; for the history of southern English is largely concerned with the spread of Anglian forms and the disappearance of Saxon. Moreover, some of the changes that turned the English of Alfred into the English of Chaucer (e.g. loss of inflections and grammatical gender) began in the Anglian regions of the north. ‘Leaving out of account the changes that were due to French influences, we might almost sum up the history of the language during five centuries in the formula that it became more and more “English” and less and less “Saxon”.’

It is worth notice that when pre-Conquest English began to attract attention in the sixteenth century, it was generally called ‘Saxon.’ ‘The popular view was that the “English” people and the “English” language came into being as the result of the fusion of “Saxons” and Normans.’ To this day people apply the name ‘Saxon’ to architectural details in Anglian

districts, and novelists make their heroes utter in ‘terse Saxon’ words that are sometimes Danish. ‘The term “Saxon” is historically incorrect as a designation for the whole early Germanic population of Britain,’ for it belongs properly to certain inhabitants of Germany. Camden therefore used *lingua Anglosaxonica* for pre-Conquest English, meaning thereby, not a blend of Anglian and Saxon, but simply ‘English-Saxon’ as distinguished from ‘German-Saxon.’ But the term came to be taken as a ‘general name applicable to the Anglian and Saxon dialects in their fully inflected stage,’ and, as such, it tends to survive, the term ‘Old English’ being equally ambiguous. Both are useful, for the latter name enables us to adopt with fair accuracy the practice introduced by Jacob Grimm of dividing a language into its Old, Middle and Modern periods. But we must not ‘allow ourselves to imagine that there was any definite date at which people ceased to speak “Old English” and began to speak “Middle English”.’ However the date 1150, ‘as the approximate point of demarcation between the Old and Middle periods of English, is less arbitrary than chronological boundaries in the history of a language usually are....While the Middle English period has thus a definite beginning, it has no definite ending. It is, however, convenient to regard it as terminating about 1500, because the end of the fifteenth century coincides pretty closely with the victory of the printing-press over the *scriptorium*.’

CHANGES IN GRAMMAR

‘The most striking characteristic of Old English, as compared with later stages of the language, is that it retained without essential change the inflectional system which it possessed at the beginning of its history. So far as regards the verbs, this system was very imperfect in comparison with that of Greek, or even of Latin....On the other hand, the system of declension was nearly as elaborate as in any of the languages of the Indogermanic family.’ The terminations, however, tended to be assimilated. Thus, in the declension of the Gothic *guma*, a man, there are six distinctive forms in the eight cases of singular and plural; in the declension of O.E. *guma* there are only three —*guman* being Accus. Gen. and Dat. singular as well as Nom. and Accus. plural. The state of the Northumbrian dialect was even worse, as, in that tongue, the final *-n* came to be regularly dropped in nearly all grammatical endings, and the unaccented final vowels were pronounced obscurely, and so became confused in the texts. The ‘almost universal substitution of *-es* for the many Old English endings of the genitive singular and the nominative and accusative plural’ was not a result of the Norman Conquest. ‘The beginnings of this alteration in the language can be traced to a far earlier time.’ In tenth-century Northumbrian writings we find a tendency to treat nouns as if they all ‘made their genitives in *-es* and their plurals in *-as*,’ and the *-as* tended to become *-es* in pronunciation. The Midland dialect imitated or developed the same tendencies—an important fact, as the ‘English of educated Londoners had, in the fourteenth century, lost most of its original southern peculiarities, and had become essentially a midland dialect. Hence the writings of Chaucer show, as a general rule, only the *-es* plurals and the *-es* genitives; the “irregular plurals,” as we may now call them, being hardly more numerous than in modern standard English. Words adopted from

French often retained their original plurals in *-s*. The dative case disappeared from midland English in the twelfth century, so that Chaucer's declension of substantives is as simple as that of our own day.' Southern English (Kentish and W. Saxon) was more conservative in the matter of endings, but a tendency to reduce all the vowels to an obscure *e* helped to make that vowel the ending of all cases in the singular and *-en* the ending of all cases in the plural—there being many nouns whose *nominatives* had so ended.

'The forms of the Old English pronouns of the third person, in all dialects, were, in several instances, curiously alike in pronunciation....As the pronouns were most commonly unemphatic, such differences as those between *him* and *heom*, *hire* and *heora*, would, usually, be slighter in speech than they appear in writing...and were simply obliterated.' In the north and a great part of the midlands the resulting ambiguities 'were got rid of by the process (very rare in the history of languages) of adopting pronouns from a foreign tongue. In many parts of these regions the Danes and Northmen formed the majority, or a powerful minority, of the population, and it is from their language that we obtain the words now written, *they*, *their*, *them*, and, perhaps, also *she*, though its precise origin is not clear....*Ormulum* has always *they* (written þeȝȝ), but retains *heore*, *hemm* beside the newer *their*, *them* (written þeȝȝre, þeȝȝm); in the fourteenth century *they*, *their*, *them* are found fully established in all northern and east midland writings....Chaucer uses *she* and *they*; but his *her* serves both for "her" (accusative, genitive and dative) and for "their," and he has always *hem* for "them."...The Old English *ic* became *I* early in the thirteenth century,' but in the South *ich* was general.

'The Old English inflections of adjectives and article, and, with them, the grammatical genders of nouns, disappeared almost entirely early in Middle English.' In these respects *Ormulum* and Chaucer are almost alike. 'The forms of the present participle, which, in Old English, ended in *-ende*, afford a well-marked criterion of dialect in Middle English. The northern dialect had *falland*, the southern *fallinde*; in the midland dialect, *fallande* or *fallende* gradually gave place to *fallinge*, which is the form used by Chaucer.'

All these changes were once generally believed to have been brought about by the Norman Conquest; but scholars have abandoned that view; 'even in the south, the *spoken* language had travelled a considerable distance towards the Middle English stage before the fateful date A.D. 1066.' Of course the Norman occupation had influence; the new political unity and the development of intercommunication tended to diffuse the northern grammatical simplifications; but if we except such possible effects as the use of *of* instead of a genitive inflection and the polite substitution of plural for singular in the second person, 'hardly any specific influence of French upon English grammar can be shown to have existed.'

PRONUNCIATION AND SPELLING

'The runic alphabet that had been used by the heathen English was, soon after their conversion, superseded (for most purposes) by the Latin alphabet of 22 letters, to which afterwards were added the three characters *w* (called *wynn*), *þ* (*th*, called *thorn*), which belonged to the runic alphabet, and *ð*, differentiated from *d* by the addition of a cross-bar'; the *ð* (called *eth*) and *þ*

were used indifferently—there was no attempt to use them as distinctive symbols for the two sounds of *th*. ‘About A.D. 1000, the vowels were probably sounded nearly as in modern Italian,’ except that *y* was like the French *u* and *æ* like the *a* in *pat*—the modern ‘Alfred’ representing the old ‘Ælfred.’ ‘The consonants had, for the most part, the same sounds as in modern English,’ with some exceptions that need not be noted here.

‘The striking change in the written language of England during the twelfth century was, to a considerable extent, a matter of mere spelling.... Children ceased to be regularly taught to read and write English, and were taught to read and write French instead. When, therefore, the mass of the new generation tried to write English, they had no orthographical traditions to guide them, and had to spell the words phonetically according to French rules. They used *ch* instead of the old *c*, when it was pronounced as in *cirice* church. The sound of the Old English *sc* in *sceamu* shame, which did not exist at that time in French, was rendered by *ss*, *ssh*, *sch*, or *sh*. The French *qu* took the place of *cp*.... The symbol *æ* was dropped, its place being taken by *a* or *e*.... The letters *þ*, *ð* and *p* were used, though often blunderingly...often we find their sounds awkwardly rendered by *t*, *th*, *ht*, or *d*, and *u*. And in the twelfth century, though the continental variety of the Roman alphabet was generally used for writing English, it was found convenient to retain the native form *ȝ* of the letter *g* for those two of its sounds that the French *g* lacked, namely, those of *gh* and *y* (as in *year*). A new letter was thus added to the alphabet, and, though it came to be written *ȝ*, exactly like the contemporary form of *z*, it preserved its name “yok” until the fourteenth century.... In addition to the two original values of the “yok,” it very early obtained a third use, being employed (without indicating any change of pronunciation) instead of the Old English *h* in certain positions, as in *kniȝt*, *ibroȝt*, *rouȝ*, for which the older spelling was *cniht*, *gebroht*, *ruh*. But, in the fourteenth century, many writers substituted *y* or *i* for *ȝ*, when pronounced as in *zeer* (*year*), and *gh* in all other cases. In the thirteenth century, the letters *ȝ* and *ð* went out of use, the former being replaced by the northern French *w*.’ The *ȝ* was retained, but was treated as a mere compendium for *th*, which generally took its place, except initially. The letter *y* as a vowel was treated as an alternative form of *i*, and *u* and *v* were regarded as forms of the same letter.

The history of the changes in English pronunciation down to the time of Chaucer is too intricate to be summarized here. How different was the course of development in different parts of the country may be exemplified by the fact that the English pronunciation *home*, *stone* and the Scottish *hame*, *stane*, both derive from the O.E. long *a* (as in *father*). It may be interesting to note that the “Zummerzet” pronunciation of initial *f* and *s* as *v* and *z* was in the fourteenth century current all over the south, and is exactly recorded, for instance in the Kentish *Ayenbite of Invyt* (1340), where we even find *zorȝe* (*sorrow*) instead of Chaucer’s *sorwe*.

CHANGES IN VOCABULARY

The Norman Conquest had a profound influence on vocabulary. A few French words seem to have come in even before the Conquest. In the Peterborough *Chronicle* (c. 1154) there are about a score. About a hundred may

be collected from the southern and south midland homilies of the twelfth century, but the north midland *Ormulum*, at the end of that century, contains scarcely any. Layamon (thirteenth century) uses nearly a hundred, many of which are not identical with those occurring in Wace, from whom he was translating. At the end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth century, 'the proportion of Romantic words is so great that we may correctly say that the literary English of the period was a mixed language.' In certain of the romances there are passages in which nearly every important noun, adjective and verb will be found to be French; and even in the northern *Cursor Mundi* and Rolle 'there is, on the average, at least one French word in every two lines.' It is singularly wrong to charge Chaucer with having 'corrupted' English by the introduction of French words. In fact, his language is comparatively free from Gallicisms. 'It cannot be absolutely proved that he ever, even in his translations, made use of any foreign word that had not already gained a recognised place in the English vocabulary.'

English literature of the eleventh century, being mainly southern, contains few Scandinavian words; but in the thirteenth century, when the language of the north and north-midlands reappeared in a written form, 'the strongly Scandinavian character of its vocabulary becomes apparent.'

A remarkable fact, which we can barely mention here, is the entire disappearance of many Old English words from the language. 'In the first thirty lines of Aelfric's homily on St Gregory, there occur the following words, none of which survived beyond the middle of the thirteenth century: *andweard* present, *gedeorf* labour, *gecnyrdnys* study, *gesāliglīce* blessedly, *bigēn* worship, *ætbregdan* to turn away, *gebigan* to subdue, *drohtnung* manner of life, *swutellīce* plainly, *wer* man, *gereccan* to relate, *ēawfēst* pious, *ācenned* born, *æpelboren* nobly born, *mægþ* kindred, *wita* senator, *geglengan* to adorn, *swēgan* to sound, be called, *wacol* watchful, *bebod* command, *herigendlīce* laudably, *geswutelian* to manifest.' The fourteenth century alliterative poets use some of the ancient epic synonyms for 'man' or 'warrior': *bern*, *renk*, *wye* and *freke* (O.E., *beorn*, *rinc*, *wiga*, *freca*); and the late ballad word *burde* (lady) seems to be the feminine of *byrde*, high-born, 'of which only one instance is known, and that in prose.'

ENGLISH DIALECTS IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

Only a bare mention of certain peculiarities can be made here. 'It appears likely that, on the whole, the difference between the speech of the north and that of the south had rather increased than diminished between the twelfth and the fourteenth century.' Inflections had decayed and intercommunication had produced some mixture of forms; nevertheless the differences in pronunciation and vocabulary were considerable. The use of dialect did not then, as now, indicate a person of inferior education, and writers employed for literary purposes the language they habitually spoke. 'It is probable that Chaucer would not have found it quite easy to read the *Ayenbite of Inwyt*...nor would he have felt much more at home with the writings of his contemporaries among the west midland alliterative poets or those of northern poets like Laurence Minot.'

'The following comparative list of forms of words may assist the reader to obtain a general notion of the extent and nature of the diversities of the written language of different parts of the country in the fourteenth century':

	Kentish	South-Western	E. Midland	W. Midland	Northern
Fire	veer	vuir, fuir	fuir	fuir	fier
Sin	zenne	sunne	sinne	sinne	sin
I shall say	Ich ssel zigge	Ich schal sigge	I shal seyn	I shal saie	I sal sai
She says	hy zeyth	heo seyth	she seyth	ho saith	scho sais
They say	hy ziggeth	hy siggeth	they seyn	hy, thai sayn	thai sai
Living	liviynde	liviinde	livinge	living	livand
Her name	hare nome	hor nome	her name	hur name	her nam
Their names	hare nomen	hure nomen	hir names	hur namus	thair names

The ultimate triumph of the east midland dialect was largely due to the fact that it *was* midland, *i.e.* intermediate between the mutually unintelligible southerner and northerner. The fact that Oxford and Cambridge were linguistically in this area doubtless had an influence. The 'London' English of Chaucer and the not dissimilar Oxford English of Wyclif spread that form far and wide in the land. 'Even in the lifetime of these two great writers, it had already become inevitable that the future common English of literature should be English essentially of the east midland type.'

